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Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 1-81

February 29, 1916

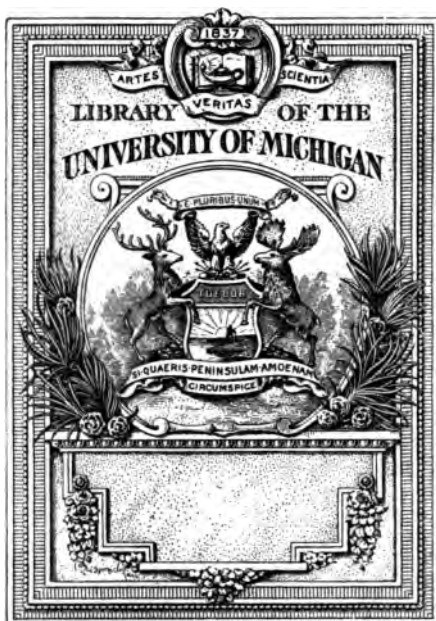
THE INFLUENCE OF ANTHROPOLOGY ON
THE COURSE OF POLITICAL
SCIENCE

BY

JOHN LINTON MYRES

*Wykeham Professor of Ancient History in the
University of Oxford*

BERKELEY,
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS,
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THE INFLUENCE OF ANTHROPOLOGY ON THE COURSE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE*

JOHN L. MYRES

Anthropology is the Science of Man. Its full task is nothing less than this, to observe and record, to classify and interpret, all the activities of all the varieties of this species of living being. In the general scheme of knowledge, therefore, anthropology holds a double place, according to our own point of view. From one standpoint it falls into the position of a department of zoology, or geography; of zoology, since man, considered as a natural species, forms only one small part of the animal population of this planet; of geography, because his reason, considered simply as one of the forces which change the face of nature, has, as we shall see directly, a range which is almost worldwide. From another point of view anthropology itself, in the strictest sense of the word, is seen to embrace and include whole sciences such as psychology, sociology, and the rational study of art and literature; since each of these vast departments of knowledge is concerned solely with a single group of the manifold activities of man. In practice, however,

*This essay was originally written as a Presidential Address to the Anthropological Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science on the occasion of its meeting at Winnipeg in 1909. The address was printed in the *Proceedings of the Association* at that meeting (London, John Murray, 1910). The investigation is resumed here with more extensive references, ampler quotations from the older writers, and the addition of two sections, on Comparative Philology, and on Polygenism. This re-writing has been the result of my residence in Berkeley as Sather Professor of Classical Literature at the University of California during the months of January to April, 1914.

a pardonable pride, no less than the weighty fact that man, alone among the animals, truly possesses reason, has kept the study of man a little aloof from the rest of zoology. Dogmatic scruples have intervened to prevent man from ever ranking merely as one of the "forces of nature," and have set a hard problem of delimitation between historians and geographers. And the pardonable modesty of a very young science—for modern anthropology is barely as old as chemistry—has restrained it from insisting on encyclopedic claims in face of reverend institutions like the sciences of the mind, of statecraft, and of taste.

Yet when I say that anthropology is a young science I mean no more than this, that in the unfolding of that full bloom of rational culture, which sprang from the seeds of the Renaissance, and of which we are the heirs and trustees, anthropology found its place in the sunlight later than most; and almost alone among the sciences can reckon any of its founders among the living. This was of course partly an accident of birth and circumstance; for in the House of Wisdom there are many mansions; a Virchow, a Bastian, or a Tylor might easily have strayed through the gate of knowledge into other fields of work; just as Locke and Montesquieu only narrowly missed the trail into anthropology.

But this late adolescence was also mainly the result of causes which we can now see clearly. Man is, most nearly of all living species, the "ubiquitous animal." Anthropology, like meteorology, and like geography itself, gathers its data from all longitudes, and almost all latitudes, on this earth. It was necessary therefore that the study of man should lag behind the rest of the sciences, as long as any large masses of mankind remained withdrawn from its view; and we have only to remember that Australia and Africa were not even crossed at all—much less explored—by white men, till within living memory, to realize what this limitation means. In addition to this, modern Western civilisation, when it did at last come into contact with aboriginal peoples in new continents, too often came, like the religion which it professed, bringing "not peace but a sword." The customs

and institutions of alien people have been viewed too often, even by reasonable and good men, simply as "ye beastlie devices of ye heathen," and the pioneers of our culture, perversely mindful only of the narrower creed, that "he that is not with us is against us," have set out to civilise savages by wrecking the civilisation which they had.

I need not labour the point that it is precisely these two causes, ignorance of many remoter peoples, and reckless destruction or disfigurement of some that are near at hand, which are still the two great obstacles to the progress of our science. But it is no use crying over spilt milk, and I turn rather to the positive and cheering thought that the progress of anthropology has been rapid and sure, in close proportion to the spread of European intercourse with the natives of distant lands; and that its further advance is essentially linked with similar enterprises.

Anthropology and Politics in Ancient Greece

Instances of what I mean are scattered over the whole history of anthropology. Philosophy, as we all know, begins in wonder; it is the surest way to jostle people out of an intellectual groove into new lines of thought, if they can be confronted personally and directly with some object of that numerous class which seems uncouth only because it is unfamiliar. The sudden expansion of the geographical horizon of the early Greeks, in the seventh and sixth centuries, B. C., brought these earliest and keenest of anthropologists face to face with peoples who lived, for example, in a rainless country, or in trees, or who ate monkeys, or grandfathers, or called themselves by their mothers' names, or did other disconcerting things; and this set them thinking, and comparing, and collecting more and more data, from trader and traveller, for an answer to perennial problems, alike of their anthropology and of ours. Can climate alter character or change physique, and if so, how? Does the mode of life or the diet of a people affect that people's real self, or its value for us? Is the father, as the Greeks believed, or

the mother who bore them, the natural owner and guardian of children? Is the Heracles whom they worship in Thasos the same god as he whose temple is in Tyre? Because the Colchians wear linen, and practise circumcision, are they to be regarded as colonists of the Egyptians? or can similar customs spring up independently on the Nile and on the Phasis? Here, in fact, are all the great problems of modern anthropology, flung out for good and all, as soon as ever human reflective reason found itself face to face with the facts of other human societies, even within so limited a region as the old Mediterranean world.

And I would have you note that these old Greek problems, like all the supreme problems of science old and new, were not theoretical problems merely. Each of them stood in direct relation to life. To take only cases such as I quoted just now from the Father of History—is there, for example, among all the various regions and aspects of the world, any real earthly paradise, any delectable country, where without let or hindrance the good man may lead the good life? Is there an ideal diet, an ideal social structure, or in general, an ideal way of life for men; or are all the good things of this world wholly relative to the persons, the places, and the seasons where they occur? I do not mean that the ancient Greeks ever found out any of these things, for all their searching; or even that all ancient seekers after marvels and travellers' tales were engaged consciously in anthropological research at all. I mean only this: that the experiences, and the problems, and the practical *end* of it all, were as certainly present to the minds of men like Herodotus and Hippocrates, as they have been in all great scientific work that the world had seen.¹

In the same way it has for some while been clear to me that neither Plato nor Aristotle, the great outstanding figures of fourth-century Greece, was constructing theories of human nature entirely in the air. Their conceptions both of the ideal

¹ I have dealt more fully with this aspect of fifth-century Greece in a paper contributed to *Anthropology and the Classics*, Oxford, 1908.

state of society, and of the elements which were fundamental and essential in actual societies as they knew them, were determined to a very large extent by their observation of real men in Sparta, Persia, or Scythia. But it is also clear that much that had been familiar to the historians of the fifth century, and particularly to Herodotus, had fallen out of vogue with the philosophers of the fourth. Systematic clearness had been attained only by the sacrifice of historic accuracy. Thucydides, in fact, standing right in the parting of the ways between history and rhetoric, might fairly have extended his warnings to a dissociation of history from political philosophy, which was just as imminent.

The "Middle Ages" of Social Despair

From the modern evolutionary standpoint, as in the teleology of Aristotle, the notion that the *original* state of anything has any necessary connection with the perfect or *ideal* state of it, is barely intelligible. Each of these philosophies, like the earlier philosophy of Solon, "looks to the end," and interprets the past and the present in the light of the future and in strict relation to it. But this return to what in practical life would be optimism, is of quite recent growth, and closely related to the revival of Greek ways of thinking which characterizes our time. Almost until living memory, doctrines of a perfect past, and of human history as a series of lapses from past perfection remained dominant no less in what passed for anthropology than in history, theology, and thought at large. Sometimes it was the Golden Age of the Greeks of Hesiod's time, a time of blood and iron, of the wreckage of the older order, and chaotic gestation of a new; when belief (and practice too) was tinged, now with sunset memories of "Golden Mycenae," now with the twilight hope of a *magnus annus*—first fruit of astronomy newborn—which should at length turn full circle and repeat the perfection—and the decadence. Sometimes it was the deciduous "Paradise" of the Semites, once gone and gone forever, with no hope left at all in Babylonia, but that of

a final end to the existing cycle of things; or at best, where Egyptian ideas penetrated, of a day of final reckoning, when Osiris—or another—should come. But whether Greek of the Iron Age, or Semitic in origin, the belief was belief in a decadence. It involved a conception of history as a progress away from the ideal, in the direction of *παρεβάσεις*, perverted or distorted states, forming a series of progressive degeneration. Plato, whose experience inculcated pessimism, even while the eye of faith saw optimism, accepted from current literature, and from tales of Egypt, Hesiodic decadence and the notion of circularity; and even Aristotle, in politics, never freed himself from a popular impression at variance with his philosophic scheme.

From quite another side of Semitic thought, not unaffected by those Egyptian ideas of a restitution of all things “when Osiris shall come,” arises the Christian idea of what we may call the “post-social state,” when there shall be “neither marrying nor giving in marriage” but a dissolution of all bonds of civil society as we know it; a state of things which is to be, on the one hand, a complete realization of all that the natural order (conceived still as a decadence) prohibited the individual from attaining, and, on the other, almost the annihilation of individuality by incorporation in the Being of God. The latter solution, of course, is neither Greek, nor Semitic, nor Egyptian, but comes in from the tropical East, and mainly after Alexander’s time, though Plato had glimpses of it. And this idea of an evolution *into* a state of Nature which is future, whether conceived as proceeding *ad infinitum*, or as attaining a private consummation, has had profound influence from time to time, both on the growth of political theory, and in the practical administration of states. And besides this kinetic optimism, the static optimism of Greek politicians, and of Aristotle, when he is most nearly reflecting *τά λεγόμενα*—the Greek “man in the street”—faded almost out of existence, except among the barns of the Rich Fool, and in latterday Homes of Lost Causes.

Anthropology and the Renaissance

At the Revival of Learning it was the same as in the great days of Greece. New vistas of the world were being opened up by the voyagers; new types of men, of modes of life, of societies and states, were discovered and described; new comparisons were forced upon men by new knowledge crowding thick into their minds; and new questions, which were nevertheless old as the hills, made eddies and rapids in the swift current of thought, and cried out for an answer. Take the central political problems for example: What constitutes the right to govern, and what is the origin of law? In medieval Europe this was simple enough. The duke, or the king, or the bishop governed by authority of the emperor, or the pope; and pope and emperor ruled (like Edward VII) "by the Grace of God." Yet here, in Guinea, in Monomotapa, in Cathay, and in Peru, were great absolute monarchies which knew nothing of the pope or the emperor and were mighty hazy about God. Yet their subjects obeyed them, and gave good reasons for their obedience, and chiefest of their reasons (as in all times and places) was this: "We should be much worse off if we didn't."

Unsocial Man and the Pre-Social State

It would take me very far afield if I were to try to show how this universal answer came to change its ground from politics to anthropology, so that to the question—how men knew that they would be much worse off if they didn't—the answer came, that once upon a time they *had been* much worse off, *because* they didn't. For my present purpose it is enough to note that, in all ages, philosophers who set out to define the *nature* of the State, have become involved in speculations about its *origin*; that historians in their researches into its origin, have been forced into conclusions as to its nature; and that in both cases every belief about the nature of the State has been found to involve a belief about a state of nature; an answer of some kind, that is, to the question whether man was originally and



naturally a social animal, or whether at some early period of his history he became social and domestic. In the latter event, how was domestication effected, and what sort of thing was undomesticated man? In the ancient world, after long controversy, Aristotle's definition of man as the "social animal" had carried the day, and ruled that question out of court. But at the Revival of Learning, the unnatural behaviour of certain actual societies towards their individual members had revived irresistibly the whole question whether society was part of the natural order at all, and not a device of the heathen, a mistake or a *pis aller*; and whether, if society was not thus "natural," men would not really be better off if they returned to their natural, pre-social, *unsocial* state, and began again at the beginning, to work out their own salvation. This belief in a pre-social state played a large part in the political philosophy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; and conversely it was the very fact that the pre-social state as a philosophical conception fell out of vogue at the beginning of the nineteenth, which has distinguished modern political philosophy so markedly from its predecessors.

I have made it clear, I hope, that our problem of the history of the doctrine of a State of Nature and of its influence on political thought is independent altogether of the question how such a doctrine first came into existence. All that it can concern us to presuppose is that there descended from the ancient world to the modern a continuous popular tradition and fixed idea, *first*, that there had "once upon a time" been a stage of man's development in which all the conventions and restrictions of actual society, as well as all its benefits, were uninvented yet, and human animals—to put the whole matter in a nutshell—expatiated on this planet undomesticated; *secondly*, that in spite of social habits long acquired, it was still possible to isolate, by philosophical analysis of society itself and of the human mind, those traits, or some of them, which had characterized undomesticated man in those ancient days; *thirdly*, that it was conceivable—such are the audacities of faith—that some



of the *mirabilia* which ancient writers had preserved, from Herodotus onward, about the inhabitants of the Extremities, might turn out to have been survivals of pre-social man into an age when most men had become wholly social; and *fourthly*, that, if so, there was still an off-chance that further research might even now reveal examples of pre-social, or at least, actually *non-social* man, under circumstances which might permit him to be studied. But I have sufficiently indicated already, that the revival of political speculation which accompanied the Revival of Learning, however closely it may have been linked with the practical necessities of European politics, went also hand in hand with a revolt against an older psychology, and with a great new movement of world-study both for economic and for scientific ends.

It can easily happen that it matters less *what* men think, than *why* they think it. The precise form and content of their thoughts depend usually on temporary and local conditions, and may change promptly in response to changes in these; and it is the point of view from which they approach a new problem, the predispositions which they bring, the training which they have won from previous experience, which make the outcome of their thinking so incalculable beforehand; so simple, however, and so instructive, when we come to comment on it afterwards, in the light of history. This wider survey, to which the historian aspires, permits explanation of things thought. What neither historian nor psychologist can hope to do is to explain the thinker of them, the hero or the genius. That remains presupposed, a *primum mobile*, with effects, but no causes within human view: and the biographer's business is twofold, to follow forward these effects of the great man's interference in affairs, and to follow backward (what does lie within the field of history) the antecedents of those other factors of society and culture, among which at that precise moment in history the new force intervened; the instruments, human and other, with which he strives to realize what he has it in his mind to imagine. The completed work of art, however, is not often quite what

the artist set out to create. And this is just as true in the history of thought as in the history of action which it is so fatally easy to dissociate from it.

Now it is impossible to compare the successive presentations of the pre-social state, without being struck by the widely different content of them. But how was it that the conception of a pre-social state of man, whether conceived as a period of pre-historic development or as the result of a psychological analysis of mankind in society, assumed in different writers such widely different forms, and led—as was only natural—to such widely different proposals for the remedy of actual grievances? Why should Hobbes, for example, describe the life of the natural man as little better than a hell upon earth, “no arts, no letters, no society; and (which is worst of all) continuall feare, and danger of violent death; and the life of man solitary, poore, nasty, brutish and short”; “no property, no dominion, no Mine and Thine distinct, but only that to be every man’s, that he can get; and for so long as he can keep it.” How comes it that Locke, whatever else he may deny his natural man, at all events reserves to every man, even in his first *Treatise on Government*, property in his own person, and (as a corollary to this) property in the products of his labour, while in his second *Treatise* he contemplates also a natural property in agricultural land? How comes it, again, that Montesquieu bases the whole fabric of civilisation upon the timidity of pre-social man; while for Rousseau it is the utter fearlessness of the savage which most distinguishes him from the craven members of societies? Flat contradictions of this sort, between thinkers who were almost contemporaries, and who agree so closely in the form and system of their reasoning, clearly result not so much from any defect of method as from some discrepancy in the data which the method was employed to explain. The question, therefore, begins to assume another shape: Whence did those political philosophers, whose theories involved a state of nature, get their respective data as to the character of natural man?



It is common knowledge, of course, as I have hinted already, that each thinker's own view of the nature of society went far to determine his imagination of its origin; and that his view of its nature was itself suggested by the political stresses of his own time. Hobbes, for example, writing in the middle of the Great Rebellion, was searching for a sovereign whose mandate should be beyond dispute;² Locke, standing in even closer relation to the Revolution of 1688, was explicitly replying to the advocates of a divine right of kings, and insisting that the contract is revocable; Rousseau, confronted with iniquities which resulted from an antiquated distribution of privilege, is all for equality and fraternity as the necessary guarantees of liberty.

But it is possible also to put the sequence in the reverse order, and to make the inquiry, how far each thinker's conclusions as to practical politics resulted from his view of the nature of the State; how far his view of its nature is deducible from his beliefs as to its origin; and how far his beliefs as to the origin of society were themselves rendered almost inevitable for him, by the state of contemporary knowledge of the more primitive specimens of mankind and of the State itself.

The "Geographic Control" of the Renaissance

That such a line of reasoning was not foreign to the political thinkers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is clear from a variety of considerations. In the first place, the whole movement in political philosophy, which is in question, stands, like the political events with which its turning points are so closely connected in point of time and personality, in the closest relation with a larger contemporary movement of scientific inquiry, of which the inquiry into the antecedents of society and of man is only one special, departmental, and relatively late

² Hobbes, *Leviathan* (ed. A. R. Waller. Cambridge, 1907), p. 528: "And thus I have brought to an end my discourse of Civill and Ecclesiasticall Government, occasioned by the disorders of the present time. . ."

application. And in the larger sphere, also, a general advance of physiographic theory had gone hand in hand with active physiographic discovery. Bacon's enlargement of current ideas of scientific method stands, as we all know, in the closest historical connection with the discovery of a new world by Columbus, and with the new prospects of exploration within the old world which were opened by Vasco da Gama. It would therefore be natural to expect that Hobbes, for example, should reflect in his *Leviathan* the current conceptions of what *pre-social* man would be like, as inferred from the behaviour and circumstances of *unsocial* man as reported by contemporary voyagers.

Two great events of this time, in particular, set the study of mankind, no less than all the physical sciences, on a new pinnacle of outlook, and challenged all the theories of the Greeks and Arabians which had done duty at second-hand to explain the universe, since the great days of Alexandria. First, the discovery of the Cape route to the East threw open to European observation vast tracts of country and an immense number of societies of men whose fame indeed had come down through Pliny and Ptolemy, but whom no one but a few traders and missionaries had visited in person, since the Arab and the Turk tore East and West asunder and began to keep them so. Then, within the same generation, the discovery of America opened up, literally, a New World, wherein (among many marvels) one of the things which impressed its explorers most vividly and constantly was the presence of varieties of men whose mere existence shook Adamite theories of mankind to their foundation; who utterly failed to conform to the traditional requirements of the Flood, and professed inveterate ignorance on that subject; and whose manners and customs—when indeed they seemed to have any—betrayed a culture, or a lack of culture, totally unlike anything which the Old World yielded, even taking into account the barbarous *Terra Nigritarum* which lay between the Canaries and India.

Thus almost at one gift three new sets of human documents were presented to the philosophers of Europe: (1) first-hand

knowledge of the famous empires and kingdoms of the civilised East, of India, China, and the parts of "India beyond the Ganges," as the saying was, beyond the desert belt of Asia; (2) fresh access to the black men, south of the desert belt of Africa; (3) the discovery, beyond the no less desert ocean, of new and Western "Indies," peopled by wholly un-Indian tribes, whose aspect was Tartar rather than Indian or Malay, and whose behaviour seemed all the more inexplicable because it differed totally from what was expected so surely by the geographers.

Bodin, 1577

It was long before this mass of new material could be compared and applied by the philosophers at home; but it was collected and recorded with avidity, and the insatiable demand for books of travel spread it broadcast, and made it sink deep into popular imagination. Still, with all his learning, even Bodin, writing in 1577, *Of the Lawes and Customes of a Common Wealth*,³ hardly shows by an allusion that he appreciates the new age that has dawned. There is a wonderful chapter, indeed, at the beginning of his fifth book, which is thus entitled: "What order and course is to be taken to apply the form of a Common Wealth to the diversitie of men's humors, and the meanes how to discover the nature and disposition of a people." Its contents show clearly what contribution he hoped to make to the art of statecraft, and also what was to be his method of research, to extract the truth from the mass of conflicting instances. It contains the whole pith and kernel of modern anthropo-geography, and completely anticipates the ethnological work of Montesquieu; but the data upon which it is based are with a single exception such as would have been available before the fall of Constantinople. His climatic contrasts are

³ I quote from the English edition of 1605, "out of the French and Latin copies done into English by Richard Knowlles, Author of the Turkish History."

based on the Ptolemaic geography; he betrays no knowledge of a habitable south temperate zone, and argues as if the world broke off short at the Sahara. It is only by a curious afterthought, which superposes on his classification of environments from arctic North to tropic South, a cross-division by grades of culture from civil East to barbaric West, that he betrays any hint that his cosmography has been disturbed by the new age of exploration. "The Spaniards have observed," he says, "that the people of Sina (China), the which are farthest Eastward, are the most ingenious and courteous people in the world; and those of Brezill, which are farre Westward, the most cruell and barbarous;"⁴ so that East goes with South, and West with North, and Bodin's cultural equator begins to lie askew between them; and we should note that the crucial instance here supplied by "those of Brezill" is his single glimpse of Columbian man.

He has indeed, full grip of the doctrine of a pre-social state, and of the application of inductive proof to support it; but his instances are exclusively derived from classical authors.

He that would see, he says,⁵ what force education, lawes, and customes have to change nature, let him look into the people of Germanie, who in the time of Tacitus the Proconsul had neither lawes, religion, knowledge, nor any forme of a Commonweale; whereas now they seeme to exceed other nations in goodlie cities and well peopled; in arms, varieties of arts, and civil discipline.

A curious exception goes far to establish this rule. The only instance which I can recall, in which Bodin refers to an event in Negro-land, is where he illustrates the revolt of the Mombottu Negroes against the Moors in 1526 (p. 555); but this was an event, the news of which certainly reached Europe by way of the Morocco ports, not by way of the southern route, or westward down the Gambia; it was also one which made a great sensation in Europe, and was still a commonplace of cosmo-

⁴ *Loc. cit.*, English ed., 1605, p. 562.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 565.

graphers and moralists a generation later. In illustration of this I quote as follows from Peter Heylin's *Microcosmus*:⁶

The last Moroccan governor, Soui Halin, was slaine by Ischia, Anno 1526, and the negroes againe recovered their long lost liberty: instituting divers kings, and among others, Ischia was worthily made king of Tombutum. After this advancement, he quickly united many of the weaker kingdoms to his owne, which at this day is the greatest of the foure in whose hands kingly authority remaineth.

This actual example of a "Leviathan" in process of construction was thus in text-book use in 1577, a generation before the time of Hobbes.

Shakespeare's Caliban

The trend of popular opinion at the end of the sixteenth century, as to the characteristics of the state of nature, could hardly be better illustrated than by the Shakespearean conception of Caliban, "solitary, nasty, and brutish;" barely human, in fact, but for his vices; living "like a bear" (as Montesquieu so often puts it), grubbing roots, and plundering bees' nests; a prey to panic, haunted by the spirit of the power of the air, and instinctively appeasing him, as savages do, by abstinence, abasement, and offerings. Mr. Hartland has only lately called attention again to the truth of detail with which Caliban is portrayed, and Mr. Sidney Lee has gone at some length into the question of his probable originals. No doubt there is in Caliban a touch of the gorilla, pure and simple; and a touch of the gorilla's own brother, the "Salvage Man" of heraldry and medieval legend; Linnaeus and Blumenbach, in fact, quote several examples of such "wild men of the woods" who had been captured in various parts of Europe, and described in books before Shakespeare's time. But apart from his make-up—which, in the Globe Theatre (as at Her Majesty's), was mainly to tickle the gallery—Caliban is certainly neither ape nor idiot. He has his own code of conduct (when he can bring himself

⁶ I quote the Oxford edition of 1636, p. 722.

to conform to it); he knows when he has done wrong; and in his treatment of his invaders, of his small belongings, and in particular of his island property, he corresponds too closely with the current sixteenth century descriptions of the feckless, passionate "child of nature" to be set down as anything else but an experiment in the portrayal of natural man. And if we once view Caliban from this standpoint, it becomes almost incredible that he should have preceded Hobbes' sketch of the state of nature by nearly half a century, unless Hobbes' portrait itself was based upon a type already widely current, and generally accepted in popular belief.

Edward Grimstone, 1615

I come now to a work of which I would gladly have further information. It is entitled *The Estates, Empires, and Principalities of the World*; it was published in London in 1615, and it is described as having been "translated out of the French by Edward Grimstone," doubtless the translator of Joseph Acosta (1604) and Jean Francois Le Petit (1608).⁷ I introduce this work here for three reasons. It contains a fuller application of what I shall best summarise as Baconian methods to political science, than is easily to be found elsewhere. It shows very clearly that by this time the new discoveries were already being applied systematically to philosophical ends. And it illustrates a remarkable series of coincidences of discovery which in less than a generation were to have a profound effect on European thought.

⁷ The *Dictionary of National Biography* knows nothing of this Edward Grimstone. I have also no clue as yet to the French original, and am inclined to suspect that "translated out of the French" is an euphemism for anonymity. So, like his translator, "I will leave him to your judicious censures, and to the mercie of the Booke-seller, who it may be, will commend him in the sale, if he be not interested in some other booke of the like nature." This is mock modesty; I know no "other booke of the like nature" between Bodin and Hobbes, and as Grimstone's volume is rare, I have not stinted my extracts.

The treatise consists of a collection of studies of human societies—*συνηγμένα πολιτεία*, as Aristotle used to call them—which professes to be complete. Its title-page, engraved by Ren. Elstracke, is of a cosmographic type which descends, for example, into the title-page of Heylin's *Microcosmus* a generation later; but which is seen here in its pristine glory. Four female figures, emblematic of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, advance to do homage to James I, who sits enthroned, as he sits on Bodley's Tower in Oxford; and below are four posed warriors, in the weapons of their countries. America is represented by an obvious Aztec warrior in a peaked cap and coat of mail; but of the four women, America alone is nude: even Africa is partially draped in a mantle. The distinction is significant, for though Europe, Asia, and Africa all contribute to the contents of the book, America provides no example of a constitution at all: if it had any human inhabitants, they were, for Edward Grimstone, in a pre-social state.

A few examples will illustrate sufficiently Grimstone's style and method, his attitude towards the new and the older learning, and his obvious debt to Bodin and to contemporary geographers. His preface censures alike the mere complacent patriots

borne so farre in love with themselves as they esteeme nothing else and think that whatsoever fortune hath set without the compasse of their power and government, should also be banished from their knowledge; [and the mere politicians] a little more careful, who finding themselves ingaged by their birth, or abroad, to some one place, strive to understand how matters pass there, and remain so tied to the consideration of their owne Commonweale as they affect nothing else, carrying themselves as parties of that imperfect bodie, whereas in their curiositie they should behave themselves as members of the world. [In such he detects] a childish and simple curiositie; for what know they, if the commonweale, which containes them, be a cage of fooles, and whether they have need to borrow something of strangers, to better the Estate thereof, or else to settle themselves there? And how can they judge if affaires in their owne Estate be well ordered, if they do not confront them with their neighbours or

with some more remote, to the end that they may repaire the defects, or better the beginnings.

“And there are others,” he goes on—and here his lash falls on the rigidly classical humanists of his own day—

which lie grovelling in the dust of their studies, searching out with the sciences the actions and manners of the Ancient, not respecting the Moderne, and they seeme so to admire the dead, as they have no care for the living. Of these three sorts of men, leaving the first to their pasture, with Lyons and Beares; and passing over the second, as incapable to see any farther, I wonder at the blindness of the last, who being endowed with excellent spirits, and exceeding curious, fill themselves with frivolous things, contemning the learning of that which imports them most, and as a man may say, know nothing in knowing all things.

What these classicists lack, in a word, is the “Science or knowledge of the World,” a good part of which knowledge “is comprehended in the discourse of this book.” And so

although my chief desseigne was to deal onely with politicke and civile matters, yet to the end they might find all together, and not be forced to seeke for the description of countries whose custome I represent, I have made the corographie,

which in the next generation Peter Heylin defines as the “exact description of some Kingdom, Countrie, or particular Province of the same.” But after describing thus “all that the countrie yeields and the beasts that naturally live there and have their breeding,” he adds

yet all this were little, to spend much time in the curious search of things the which are void of sence or reason, if I should not show you the man which dwells in evere countrie, and for whom all those things seem to have been made, first in his ancient posture, and with his old customes, either altogether or for the most part abolished, then in his modern habit, either with more civillitie or with more rudenesse, according to the changes and revolutions of the world—for apparently men may become either better or worse to the end that every man may judge which is the better of the two Estates, and make use of part of the one and part of the other, having carefully ballanced the most considerable particularities of both.

He then explains that he must take account of their economics,⁸ their means of self-defense,⁹ and

the principale peece of commonweales the which is Religion, whereof I have discoursed, to show that it is the feare of some divinitie which maintaines people in their duties, makes them obedient to their princes, and divertes them much more from all bad desseignes than armes and souldiers which environ and threaten them. I do it also to show that whereas religion wants, of what sort soever it be, policie and order faile in like manner, and barbarisme, confusion, and rebellion, reign there in a manner continually, whereas they that seise on them should presently settle in their rude minds the apprehension of some power over all to dispose of things at pleasure.

Here there is certainly a remarkable anticipation of a well-known passage of the *Leviathan*; only the point of view is different, and the cynicism of Hobbes is well away.

Grimstone was well aware that he stood at the opening of a new period of discovery.

I protest with trueth that if I have given any ranke or commendation to this worke, I will give much more to those that shall labour to make it perfect, and that any man may adde something dayly unto it, for that from time to time they have more certaine advice from all parts, especially from those countries which have not been much frequented, either by reason of the distance, or for their barbarousnesse.

For his own part, however, he had clearly done his best with the materials which he had. The "Order of all the Estates

⁸ "It importing little to know the actions of nations, if they had not meanes to judge by the commodities which the place doth yield . . . and if withall they did not understand the meanes which these people have to live in the Estate wherein they are borne; I have unto their manners joined their wealth and riches, which show by their abundance, how men which enjoy them have abandoned themselves to delights or else given themselves unto Sciences, and by the want thereof, in what manner some have continued rude and barbarous, and others have applied themselves to arts and trades, to the end they might repaire the defect of nature by the perfection of their industrie and labore."

⁹ "Moreover, knowing well that althoughe a countrie be furnished with commodities which suffice or abound, yet the inhabitants are subject to be dislodged, if they be not able to repell them which shall undertake to wrest that violently from them which they hold, for this cause I have presently, after the discourse of their wealth, added that of their forces . . . to end they may judge if the Estate whereof I discourse may be easily overthrowne and changed."

contained within this booke'' includes (besides all European states)

the kingdomes of Tartary, China, Japan, Pegu, the Great Mogul, Calicut, Narsinge, and Persia; the Turkes Estate in Europe, Africke and Asia (including the ancient kingdomes of Egypt, Judaea, Arabia, &c.), the empire of Presbiter John, the Estate of the King of Monomotapa, the realme of Congo, and the Empire of Morocco

and consequently was very fairly abreast of the travels and compilations of the day. His frank confession, therefore, that he knows only this, and wishes to know more, coupled with his total neglect of America, suggests that there may be real significance in the nude American on his title page; and that America was not regarded as offering any regular constitutions.

Now it is certainly remarkable that, with the exception of a few European republics, all the "Estates, Empires, and Principalities of the World," which the author thinks worth describing, and in particular all the non-European states, are personal monarchies of more or less absolute type: and this from a man who is expressly throwing classical and medieval experience to the winds, and setting out to describe men as he finds them.¹⁰

Peter Heylin and the Cosmographers

Nor is this peculiarity confined to Grimstone's treatise. The standard English cosmography of the early seventeenth century

¹⁰ A good example of his analysis is the opening paragraph of his chapter on the Government of the Turkes (p. 1064): "The government of the Ottomans is absolute, for that great Turke is maister in such sort, of all that is within his Estate, as the inhabitants tearme themselves his slaves; and their is not any one that can say he is maister of the house where he dwells, nor of the lands which he tills, no nor of himselfe, except some families which were privedged by Mahomet the second at Constantinople; and there is not one in Turkie, how great soever, that can assure himselfe of the Estate wherein he lives, or of his owne life, unless it be by speciall grace from the Great Turke. He maintains this absolute power by two meanes: the one is, that he disarmes his subjects; the other is, that he puts all things into the hands of such as have abjured the Christian religion, and have been brought by way of tything from his Estates in their infancies. By these two meanes he enjoyes two benefits: the one is, that he deprives his provinces of the flower of their men, for that

is that of Peter Heylin, the learned, witty, and pugnacious chaplain of Archbishop Laud.¹¹ Its method of treatment is closely modelled upon that of Grimstone; the sequence of topics is the same, and there is a good deal of matter common to the two, though Heylin, of course, is far more encyclopedic in his treatment, and includes many regions and "estates" which do not occur in Grimstone. Here, too, with hardly an exception, the constitutions which are described are despotic; and, as in Grimstone, particular attention is given to the brutal kingships of Western and Southern Africa. Almost the only exceptions are the cases where the royal power is not yet fully established, and others in which, to the best of Heylin's knowledge, there is no settled form of government.

In fact, if an unprejudiced inquirer were to attempt, with only the materials available in Heylin's time, to generalise as to the political evolution of the Old World outside Europe, I do not see how he could fail to arrive at the conclusion: *first*, that the natural and primitive state of man was, in the words of Hobbes, "poor, nasty, and brutish; in continual feare, and danger of violent death"; and *secondly*, that wherever man had emerged from this primitive condition it had been by submission, more or less voluntary, and more or less by way of a *pis aller*, to an absolute despotism, usually exercised by a single imperial master who, like Ischia of Tombutum, had superseded by common consent a number of smaller despots.

On the other hand, the notion still prevails that American man is nearly, if not quite, in an unsocial state; and it begins to have practical consequences, to justify annexation, no less than theoretical. For examples, see the passages quoted below from the *Microcosmus* to illustrate the anthropology of Locke.

he makes choice of the strongest children, and fittest for armes; the other is, that he armes and assures himself by this meanes."

Compare with this his "Discourse of the King of Monomotapa" (p. 1092) who is served by Amazon troops, and guarded by two hundred great dogs "the which he holds to be the safest guard."

¹¹ My quotations are from the Oxford edition of 1636, entitled *Microcosmus: a little description of the Great World*.

Thomas Hobbes

Hobbes himself does not often make mention of ethnographic matters. His outlook is, of course, primarily political, and his analysis, so far as it is not political, is psychological. Moreover, he is reticent throughout as to his sources. Now and then, however, he does lift the veil, and betrays an interest in the reports of travellers, and even a certain dependence on them. Even erroneous generalizations are sometimes in accord with the knowledge available in his time. Speaking of inherited distinctions, for example, and in particular about coats of arms, he says that

amongst the peoples of Asia, Africa, and America, there is not, nor was ever, any such thing. The Germans only had that custome, from whom it has been derived into England, France, Spain and Italy, when in great numbers they either aided the Romans, or made their own conquests in these Western parts of the world.

In our present state of knowledge this is of course flatly untrue; but after some search I am not able to lay my hand on an authority accessible to Hobbes who makes any mention of such customs among recently discovered tribes. Neither the Japanese heraldry nor the emblazoned tents of the Sioux and Southern Algonquins, still less the so-called totem-poles of the Vancouver coast, appear in literature till many years after the time of Hobbes.

On the vexed question of the "naturalness" of patriarchal rule, on which Hobbes differs as violently as usual from the current Aristotelianism, we should expect some illustration from recently discovered savages, if only for comparison with the classical examples in Herodotus and the ancient geographers. But the absence of such references does not prove Hobbes unacquainted with the literature of discovery, if only for the reason that he omits equally to give authorities for statements of which the accessible sources are known. His general attitude, though not positively that of an anthropologist, is at all events in agreement with the contemporary trend of observation. "When the

parents are in the State of Nature," he says, "the dominion there over the child should belong equally to both; and he be equally subject to both; which is impossible, for no man can obey two Masters." In civilised states, he goes on, the law decides whether the father's claim or the mother's shall prevail; "but the question lyeth now in the state of mere nature; where there are supposed no lawes of matrimony; no lawes for the education of children; but the Law of Nature, and the natural inclination of the Sexes one to another, and to their children." "If there be no contract," he adds, "the dominion is in the mother," and this for the same obvious reason as Heylin had given already for female sovereignty in Borneo.¹²

It may be admitted at once that Hobbes' normal attitude of opposition to the Aristotelian tradition is such that the mere fact that Aristotle had laid down that "the father is naturally in authority over the sons" may be held sufficient reason why Hobbes should decide for the matriarchate. But it is certainly an instructive coincidence—and for my own part I am inclined to regard it as more—that the first great groups of matriarchal folk to be studied in any detail were precisely in areas now being thrown open by the discoverers—Southern India, Negro Africa, and North America; so that, at this period, matriarchal institutions, which had so long been treated as evidence of human depravity, or, at best, as curiosities and antiquities, were being rehabilitated for the first time in European thought as a practical scheme of society. Heylin had even generalised already that female kingships were correlated with tropical climate.¹³ Once more the circumstances of the age and the general progress

¹² Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. 20 (Cambr. ed, p. 140.): compare Heylin, *Microcosmus*, Oxford, 1636, p. 830.

"The inhabitants of this Island are so curious to have a lawful Heir upon the Throne that the Husband not being certain the children which he has by his Wife are his own, but she is certain they are hers, therefore they rather chuse to be governed by a Woman, to whom they give the Title of Queen; her Husband being only her Subject, and having no power but what she gives him." (Quoted from Tavernier II, 140.)

¹³ *Ibid.*

of knowledge were forcing on the notice of the philosophers fresh phenomena of a kind which precisely fitted the demands of the philosophic situation.

Most important of all, however, is the direct appeal of Hobbes to the evidence of discovery, when he is dealing with the state of nature itself.

It may peradventure be thought [he says]¹⁴ there was never such a time nor condition of warre as this, and I believe it was never generally so, over all the world; *but there are many places where they live so now*. For the savage people in many places of America, except the government of small families, the concord whereof dependeth on natural lust, have no government at all, and live at this day in that brutish manner, as I said before. However, it may be perceived what manner of life there would be, if there were no common Power to fear, by the manner of life which men that have formerly lived under a peaceful government use to degenerate in a civil War.

Here, clearly, we have Hobbes the psychologist and politician supplementing his psychological and political evidence from a totally different quarter, and in particular quoting America as the last citadel of pre-social man.

To refer all governments, as he explicitly does refer them, to the standard of Peru or Monomotapa; to imagine the State as a "Leviathan," a nightmare, a Frankenstein's monster, tolerable only because without it the life of man had been, and would be again, "solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short," was indeed but a partial inference from the life of "natural man," as it might have been constructed from evidence which was available even then. But it accords so closely with the accidents of contemporary discoveries, and with an actual tone of pitiful contempt which had come in fashion among the voyagers themselves, as to force the conclusion that Hobbes was really doing his best to state what nowadays we should call the "most recent conclusions of anthropologists" on a matter of practical concern, and that political science owes more than is commonly supposed to this attempt to define and interpret large


¹⁴ Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. 13 (Cambr. ed. p. 85.)

new facts of human nature as the Age of Discoveries revealed them.

John Locke

In the next generation the connection between "physics and politics" is even more strongly marked. Closely as Locke was allied, in his political aspect, to the leaders of the English Revolution, he is still more closely associated with the first administrators of the Royal Society, and that in more than one department. His *Elements of Natural Philosophy* remain to show how near he stands to Newton and the physicists; his medical studies kept him in close touch with the chemists and anatomists, and gave him a rational psychology; and we shall see how intimately his psychological analysis is concerned with his general anthropology. On the other hand, his interest in exploration and travel was keen and continuous. It peeps out in his *Two Treatises on Government*; it is evident in his *Essay on the Conduct of the Human Understanding*; it is confessed in a striking passage of his *Thoughts concerning Reading and Study for a Gentleman*; and it bears remarkable fruit in his Introduction to Churchill's *Collection of Voyages*, published in 1704, which shows him thoroughly acquainted with a wide range of the writers best qualified to inform him of the recent discoveries in regard to unsophisticated man.

Thus the case of John Locke is rather clearer than that of Hobbes. Here, too, though what impresses at the outset is the dependence of his political theory upon the political needs of his time, yet side by side with this we have the same intimate connection between his politics and his psychology as is obvious in the case of Hobbes, and it is naturally therefore to his psychology that I turn first for indications of his method of work. And we have not to go far into the *Essay concerning Human Understanding* before we have a good example of what I mean. In the third chapter he is following up his contention that there are no "innate principles" in the mind by an argument to the same effect as regards moral, or, as he calls them, "practical,"



principles. Virtue is generally approved, he says, not because it is innate, but because it is profitable; nor do men's actions betray any such "internal veneration of these rules." Even conscience, which is usually represented as checking us for our breaches of them, cannot be distinguished, in the mode of its origin, from any other kind of human knowledge, and that in many cases it is "from their education, company, and customs of their country" that men are persuaded that morals are binding on them; "which persuasion, however got, will serve to set conscience at work." Then comes the passage which concerns us now:

But I cannot see how any men should ever transgress these moral rules, with confidence and serenity, were they innate and stamped upon their minds. Have there not been whole nations, and those of the most civilised people, amongst whom the exposing of their children, and leaving them in the fields to perish by want or wild beasts, has been the practice, as little condemned or scrupled as the begetting them?

Then follows a list, a couple of pages long, of barbarities practised by the Mingrelians of the Caucasus; the natives of the interior of Africa; the Caribbees of the Orinoco; a people in Peru (who fattened and ate the children of their female captives); and many others. Among the Tououpinambos, another American tribe, "the virtues whereby they believed they merited Paradise were revenge and eating abundance of enemies; they have not so much as a name for God, and have no religion, no worship." Among the Turks "the saints who are canonised lead lives which one cannot with modesty relate."

He that will carefully peruse the history of mankind [he concludes] and look abroad into the several tribes of men, and with indifference survey their actions, will be able to satisfy himself that there is scarce that principle of morality to be named, or rule of virtue to be thought on (those only excepted that are absolutely necessary to hold society together, which commonly, too, are neglected betwixt distinct societies), which is not, somewhere or other, slighted and condemned by the general fashion of whole societies of men, governed by practical opinions and rules of living quite opposite to others.

Here, clearly, Locke claims to support, if not to found, his generalisation as to the nature of the human mind on a com-

parison of specific varieties of human behaviour. At the same time he makes definite exception of those principles which, as he says, "are absolutely necessary to hold society together," and these he is apparently inclined to regard either as actually innate or at all events as of a higher order of universality than the ordinary principles of morals. It is the beginning of a deep distinction in anthropological theory, which bears fruit, long after, in Bastian's distinction between Universal and Racial Ideas.¹⁵

There are other passages in the *Essay* in which the same argument is used, drawn from observation of actual savages. In Chapter IV, for example, he gives a long list of tribes whose members are devoid of the idea of God:

Besides the atheists taken notice of among the ancients, and left branded upon the records of history, hath not navigation discovered, in these later ages, whole nations at the Bay of Soldania (in South Africa), in Brazil, in Boranday, and in the Caribbee Islands, &c., amongst whom there was to be found no mention of a God, no religion?

He goes on to quote further evidence as to the Caiaquas of Paraguay, the "Siamites" (which "will I doubt not be a surprise to others, as it was to me"), and the Chinese. His authorities in this passage are ample: Sir Thomas Roe, the hard-headed English ambassador to the Great Mogul, and his French editor, Thévenot; de Choisy, for Siam; La Loubère, for Siam and China; Navarette and the Jesuit Relations, for China; Ovington, for Surat; Martinière, de Lèry, and Nicholas del Techo. For South Africa, of course, he quotes Terry, and through Terry, the educated Hottentot *Coore* or *Courwee*, who came to England for a time, and of whom Heylin, too, has a quaint story to tell. And these are no mere gleanings from other people's fields. Few of Locke's contemporaries had a better right to an opinion in the department of knowledge which now we should call anthropology, and which formed already a principal depart-

¹⁵ *Gemeinegedanken* and *Völkergedanken*.

ment of geography. And he had the highest opinion of its importance, for in his *Thoughts concerning Reading and Study for a Gentleman* he recommends a list of original books of travel which occupies more than a page. His own reading was enormous, and set him wholly free of compendia like those of Heylin and Moll, which indeed he could compare and criticise as an expert. By a comparison of the libraries of Christ Church, of the Bodleian, and of the Royal Society, it is easy to verify the general conclusion that if the English gentleman, as Locke feared, did not think it worth while to bestow much pains on geography, it was not for want of available books or of examples of distinguished publicists who were also good geographers. And this is of some importance to my general thesis, for it shows that in Locke's time still, as in the days of Hobbes and before, inductive anthropology and inductive politics were greatly in the air and were being studied together; and consequently that a political philosopher, no less than a psychologist, was addressing a public which knew about savages and expected a thinker to take account of them.

It is time now to turn to the *Two Treatises on Government*. Their form was, of course, mainly dictated by that of Sir Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings*, in which the patriarchal theory of society, maintained with a thoroughness which would have delighted Aristotle, anticipates almost verbally the orthodox criticism which was levelled two centuries later at McLennan and Lewis Morgan. Filmer's attitude, in fact, is exactly that of the Aristotelian and classicist thinkers castigated by Edward Grimstone. He can quote Athens, Sparta, Rome, and the Jewish patriarchs; he is learned about Nimrod and Codrus; but from beginning to end he writes as if America and the Cape route to India were still unknown. Locke has arguments enough, of a more relevant kind, to bring against Filmer, and makes no direct comment upon the narrowness of his experience of mankind; but implicitly his reply is precisely in that form. It is an appeal to experience against authority; to

modern discovery in the new worlds beyond the oceans, against traditional accounts of ancient societies in the Mediterranean and the Semitic East. To refute Filmer's claim that patriarchal rule is natural, he recalls the systematic fattening and eating of children by the Peruvians,¹⁶ and quotes a long passage from de la Vega's *History of the Yncas*. On the question of the authority of the law over an alien, the "Indian" is his typical example:

The legislative authority by which they are in force over the subjects of the commonwealth hath no power over him. Those who have the supreme power of making laws in England, France, or Holland, are, to an Indian, but like the rest of the world—men without authority.¹⁷

Locke himself, indeed, was before long to be confronted with this question in a very practical shape; for it was he who was deputed to draw up a constitution for the new settlement of Carolina, the first British settlement which came into direct contact with communities of agricultural redskins of the Muscogean stock, and consequently one of the first to be confronted with any worse problems of expropriation than those which had been described by Heylin.¹⁸

¹⁶ Ch. I, 57.

¹⁷ Ch. II, 13.

¹⁸ Heylin, *Microcosmus*, Oxford, 1636, *An advertisement to the reader concerning America in general*. "He that travelleth in any Part of America not inhabited by the Europeans shall find a world very like to that we lived in, in or near the times of Abraham the Patriarch about three hundred years after the flood. The lands lie in common to the Natives and all Comers, though some few small parcels are sown, yet the Tiller claims no right in them when he has reaped his crop once. Their Petty Kings do indeed frequently sell their kingdoms, but that in effect is only the taking Money for withdrawing and going further up the Country, for he is sure never to want land for his subjects because the country is vastly bigger than the Inhabitants, who are very few in proportion to its greatness and fertility. . . . Sometimes whole Nations change their Seats, and go at once to very distant places, Hunting as they go for a Subsistence, and they that have come after the first discoverers have found those places desolate which the other found full of inhabitants. This will show that we have done them no Injury by settling amongst them; we rather than they being the prime Occupants, and they only Sojourners in the land: we have bought however of them the most part of the lands we have, and have purchased little with our Swords, but when they have made war upon us."

In the very next section¹⁹ he is confronted with another question of natural law on which the experience of the colonists was modifying opinion profoundly:

It is not every compact that puts an end to the state of Nature between men, but only this one of agreeing together mutually to enter into one community and make one body politic: other promises and compacts men may make with one another, and yet still be in the state of Nature. The promises and bargains for truck, &c., between the two men in Soldania, or between a Suris and an Indian in the woods of America are binding to them though they are perfectly in a state of Nature in reference to one another; for truth and keeping of faith belongs to men as men, and not as members of society.

Here we have a clear anticipation of Montesquieu's position:²⁰

The law of nature is naturally founded upon this principle, that the various nations ought to do one another as much good as possible in peace, and as little harm as possible in war, without damage to their true interests. . . . All nations have a law of nations. Even the Iroquois, who eat their prisoners, have one. They send and receive ambassies; they recognise laws of war and laws of peace. The only trouble is that this law of nations is not founded on the right principles.

Montesquieu, it will be observed, recurs here, like Locke, to the "Indian in the woods of America"; and we shall see presently that there is a historical reason for this prominence of the redskin in such a context.

One of Locke's main advances upon the position taken up by Hobbes is in his treatment of the right of property:²¹

Though the earth and all inferior creatures be common to all men, yet every man has a property in his own person. This nobody has any right to but himself. The labour of his body and the work of his hands we may say are properly his. . . . The fruit or venison which nourishes the wild Indian, who knows no enclosure, and is still a ten-

¹⁹ II, 14.

²⁰ *Esprit des Lois*, I, iii.

²¹ Ch. V, 27. Though the *Two Treatises on Government* were published simultaneously in 1690, it must be remembered that the first of them was written in reply to Filmer's tract of 1680, and bears evident marks of earlier composition. It was indeed already out of date in 1690; but for our present purpose it is this very circumstance which gives it value as evidence for the growth of Locke's knowledge and thought.

ant in common, must be his; and so his—i.e. a part of him—that another can no longer have any right to it before it can do him any good for the support of his life.

Here Locke's ethnological position becomes clearer still. He is familiar with the hunting and berry-eating redskin of the New England forests; but he is not yet brought into contact with the agricultural communities of the Southeast; and still less is he aware of the paradoxical behaviour of the later-discovered Indians of the Chaco, where precisely that observance holds of which he denies the existence—namely, that the actual hunter has no recognised right to his game, and sits out, hungry and patient, until the whole of the clan has had its fill. Locke proceeds accordingly:²² "Thus this law of reason makes the deer that Indian's who hath killed it. It is allowed to be his goods who hath bestowed his labour upon it, though before it was the common right of everyone."

His estimate of the agricultural skill of his "Indians" was a low one:²³

An acre of land that bears here twenty bushels of wheat, and another in America, which with the same husbandry would do the like, are without doubt of the same natural intrinsic value. But yet the benefit mankind receives from one in a year is worth 5*l*, and the other possibly not worth a penny: if all the profit an Indian received from it were to be valued and sold here, at least, I may say truly, not one thousandth.

Here again his experience does not extend yet to the agricultural communities of Carolina and Georgia; it is the rude husbandry of the Iroquois and Algonquins that is typical, for him, of the natural state of man. More generally still, when he speaks of the function and use of money,²⁴ he asserts: "Thus in the beginning, all the world was America, and more so than that is now; for no such thing as money was anywhere known."

His views on the natural estate of matrimony are coloured again from the same source. "All the ends of marriage being

²² § 30.

²³ § 43.

²⁴ § 49.

to be obtained under politic government, as well as in the state of Nature, the civil magistrate doth not abridge the right or power of either [parent] naturally necessary to those ends''; a reflection once more of the many curious compromises between patriarchal and matriarchal government in American societies, and particularly among the peoples who had partially adopted agriculture—namely, the Southern Iroquois and the Eastern Sioux of Virginia. America, as we see from the extract on money, though it is still near the state of nature, has in some parts advanced beyond it; but it is still to America that he turns for examples of more purely natural conditions:²⁵ "If Josephus Acosta's word may be taken, he tells us that in many parts of America there was no government at all."²⁶ "There are great and apparent conjectures," says he, "that these men [in Peru] for a long time had neither kings nor commonwealths, but lived in troops, as they do this day in Florida—the Cheriquanas, those of Brazil, and many other nations, which have no certain kings, but as occasion is offered in peace or war, they choose their captains as they please."²⁷

I will not deny [he goes on]²⁸ that if we look back, as far as history will direct us [he might well have added, as far as ethnology is any guide] towards the original of commonwealths, we shall generally find them under the government and administration of one man. . . . Conformable hereunto, we find the people of America, who (living out of the reach of the conquering swords and spreading domination of the two great empires of Peru and Mexico) enjoyed their own natural freedom [to elect a monarch], though *ceteris paribus* they commonly prefer the heir of their deceased king; yet, if they find him any way weak and incapable, they pass him by and set up the stoutest and bravest man for their ruler.

Once more America supplies the typical instance, and (once more) that part of America which best satisfies Locke's description is among the hunting tribes of the Southern Algonquins,

²⁵ § 102.

²⁶ § 102.

²⁷ Again he is quoting Acosta, *National and Moral History of the East and West Indies*, 1604, I, 25.

²⁸ § 105.

with their elective war-path chiefs, and regular deposition of the war-lord as soon as his physical force abates. And once more the comparative argument is pressed home, with a hypothesis of the graduation of culture from East to West, almost in the manner of Bodin or Thucydides:

Thus we see that the kings of the Indians, in America, *which is still a pattern of the first ages in Asia and Europe*, whilst the inhabitants were too few for the country, and want of people and money gave no temptation to enlarge their possession of land, or contest for wider extent of ground, are little more than generals of their armies; and though they command absolutely in war, yet at home, and in time of peace, they exercise very little dominion, and have but a very moderate sovereignty; the resolutions of peace and war being ordinarily either in the people or in a council, though the war itself, which admits not of pluralities of governors, naturally devolves the command into the king's sole authority.²⁹

Here, at all events, is a quite unmistakable sketch of the characteristic diarchies of the warlike tribes on the Appalachian chain and its Atlantic slope—Creeks, Cherokees, and the like: a type of constitution quite limited in geographical range, and exactly representing in its distribution the outskirts of European knowledge in Locke's day.

Robinson Crusoe

I made use of Caliban as a popular anticipation of Hobbes; as a sequel to Locke I cannot do better than refer to the savages in *Robinson Crusoe*, and particularly to Man Friday. This again is a composite portrait, the predominant features of which come from the piratical Caribs of the Brazilian coast, with their dug-out canoes, their simple weapons, their inveterate cannibalism. This Carib type represents a quite different line of observation from Locke's mainly redskin evidence, and the novelty is the more important, since at the next turn of the wheel Rousseau makes just as free with this very word "Carib,"

²⁹ § 108.

as Locke has done with his "Indian in the forest," or as Montesquieu was about to do with his "Iroquois."

So far as any other element besides Carib is recognisable in the savages of Defoe—and the portrait, as I have said, is clearly a composite one—it is another eighteenth-century type, the "South Sea Islanders," first popularised in England immediately before the appearance of *Robinson Crusoe* by the discoveries of William Dampier,³⁰ which were at the same time of great geographical importance, admirably described, and very widely read. They figure repeatedly, for example, in the footnotes of Montesquieu.

But the point in which Defoe's savages date his book and affect our present subject most clearly is in the psychology of Man Friday. In particular, the dialogues between Crusoe and his man on such subjects as the existence of God, and other test questions of the day, are full of learning, and of ingenious, if partly humorous, parody of current psychology and of the state of nature. But to develop this subject in detail would require a whole essay to itself.

French Canada: Sagard and Lafitau

On French thought, meanwhile, as on English, the natives of North America had a very definite influence in the seventeenth century, though not quite in the same way as in England; for the natives whom the French encountered on the St. Lawrence were of a different stock, lived in a different latitude and climate, and enjoyed a very different culture. The French colonists also had come with different predispositions, and were struck by different characters in the order of things which they invaded. Here, as elsewhere, a foremost place must be given to the Jesuit reports—full and graphic records of native life and custom, which were widely read in France, as elsewhere,

³⁰ Capt. William Dampier, *A New Voyage round the World, describing particularly the Isthmus of America*, 1697. It will be remembered that *Robinson Crusoe* appeared in 1719.

and have hardly been superseded even now. Another book which became classical was that of Gabriel Sagard,³¹ which was well known to Locke, and is recommended by him, and was certainly a remarkable study of a barbarous people.

The full tide, however, of what I may call the Huron and Iroquois mythology does not come till the beginning of the next century. Another Jesuit missionary, Joseph Lafitau, produced, in 1724, a large work entitled *The Manners of the American Savages, compared with the manners of the First Ages*.³² Lafitau had only been five years in Canada himself; but he had the acquaintance of Julien Garnier, who had been in the mission field for sixty years, and spoke Algonquin, Huron, and all the five dialects of Iroquois. Lafitau's personal experience was mainly among the Iroquois; he did not, however, confine himself to the Redskins of French Canada; he ranged as far as the Eskimo and the Peruvians, and put together an immense amount of information. For all his protestations to the contrary, Lafitau starts with a theory:

I have not been satisfied to understand the character of the savages, and to make myself acquainted with their customs and practices. I have searched among these customs and these practices for traces of the most distant antiquity; I have read with care those of the most ancient writers who have treated of the manners, laws, and usages of the peoples with whom they had some acquaintance; I have compared these manners with one another, and I confess that while the ancient writers have given me lights on which to base some lucky guesses concerning the savages, the customs of the savages have given me light to understand more easily, and to explain many things which are in the ancient authors.

He regards the Odyssey, for example, as a collection of sketches of primitive peoples, strung together on the thread of an interrupted voyage from Troy, but having as their object to recommend the study of ethnology. Manners, moreover, are

³¹ Gabriel Sagard, *Grand Voyage au pays des Hurons*. Paris, 1632.

³² Joseph Lafitau, *Moeurs des Sauvages Américains comparées aux Moeurs des premiers Temps*. 2 vols. Paris, 1724.

to be studied to form—perhaps even to reform—manners, and also to reform people's ideas. For example, he says:

I have seen with extreme pain, in the majority of the *Relations*, that those who have written of the manners of barbarous nations have depicted them as people who have no religious feelings, no knowledge of God, no object of worship; as people who have neither laws nor administration nor forms of government; in a word, as men who have little human about them except their faces. . . . I know [he goes on] that in these latter days people have wanted to shake the proof of the unanimous agreement of the nations to recognize a Deity, as if this unanimous agreement could possibly be a mistake. But the sophisms and subtleties of some individual who has no religion, or whose religion is highly suspect, cannot shatter a truth which has been recognised by the Pagans themselves, which has been received from all time without contradiction, and which we can assume as an axiom.

Having said that it is an axiom, Lafitau proceeds rather inconsistently to declare it his task to *prove* this unanimity of opinion among all nations, by showing that there is in fact no one so barbarous as not to have a religion and not to have morals. "And I flatter myself that I make the matter so obvious that no one can doubt it, unless he wishes to be blind in the midst of light."³³ He has a long chapter, also, on their form of government, again with one eye upon Locke:

Of all the forms of government, that which has seemed to me most curious is that of the Hurons and the Iroquois, because it is most like that of the ancient Cretans and Lacedemonians, who had themselves preserved the longest the laws and usages which they received from the first ages of the world. Though this oligarchic form of government is peculiar to them, the manner of dealing with business is pretty general in all the states of barbarous nations; the nature of the business almost the same, as well as their public assemblies, their feasts and their dances.

His conviction that human nature is the same all the world over comes out again later on.³⁴ "The time which I spent among the Iroquois has tempted me to describe their manners in greater

³³ Lafitau, I, p. 20.

³⁴ Lafitau, I, p. 25.

detail, because I know them better and am more confident of what I assert. Nevertheless one may say that the manners of the natives in general are pretty much alike."

We are here already in the middle of a reaction, on the one hand, against Locke's disproof of innate ideas, and, on the other, against the belief that the savages of the New World represent, in any essential, a lower stage of culture than is to be traced in survivals in classical antiquity. In fact, we are on the straight road to the noble savage as we get him in Pope's *Essay on Man* (1733), which uses Lafitau freely. But we are also very much further still on the road to a synthetic ethnology. Locke had pointed the way, in his Thucydidean comparison of the modern Indian kings to the "most ancient kings of Europe," by which, presumably, he meant the Homeric monarchy. When, therefore, the first curiosity and wonder began to subside, and the real similarity in the performances of human reason under similar circumstances began to be perceived, the foundations began to be laid for a fresh statement of the characteristics of non-social man. Whether the synthesis was to have a psychological or historical content was still a matter of uncertainty; but, in spite of all his eccentricities, I think we may count Lafitau as a pioneer of a new line of work. This at least he had of the pioneer: his book succeeded and was much talked of; he certainly influenced Pope and his English contemporaries, and in France he prepared the way for the decisive intervention of Montesquieu.

Montesquieu

It is easy to examine in similar detail the sources for the ethnology of Montesquieu, who had of course a very wide range of reading, and evidently made good use of his English acquaintances, and his connection with the Royal Society, to keep himself well posted in current English exploration. He quotes Dampier, the *Recueil des Voyages*, and the *Lettres Edifiantes* repeatedly; together with Hyde's *Persia*, Chardin's *Persia*, Pyrard's *Turkey*, Recaut's *Empire Ottomane*, Bernier's *Kash-*

mire, Perry's *Russia*, Smith's *Guinea*, Kaempfer's *Japan*, and a number of other explorers; and he has the immense merit that he rises altogether superior to the current cant about Caribs and Hurons. I doubt whether either name occurs more than once or twice throughout the *Esprit des Lois*. Montesquieu also goes far more nearly back to the geographical standpoint of Bodin than any of his predecessors or contemporaries.³⁵ If he does not, in fact, take rank as one of the founders of synthetic ethnology, it is because, like his great predecessor, he was inclined to overrate the influence of physical environment, and to neglect the human factor of racial momentum. But it is still for the future to show whether it is Montesquieu or the ethnologists who are in the right.

Man, as a physical being, is governed [for Montesquieu] like other material bodies, by invariable laws. As a rational being he is constantly breaking the laws which God has established, and changing those which he establishes himself. [He is made, that is, for a life *in society*.] But before all these laws are those of nature, so called because they are derived solely from the constitution of our being. To understand them rightly we must consider what man was before the establishment of societies. The laws of nature will be those which he would obey in such a condition. Such a man would at first only be sensible of his weakness. His timidity would be extreme, and if we need experience of that, there have actually been found 'wild men' in the forests: they are afraid of, and run away from, everything. In this condition, each one feels his own inferiority; at best, if at all, he feels himself an equal. He would never therefore attempt to attack, and peace would be the first law of nature.

At this point Montesquieu quotes "Wild Peter," to whom we must return before long, as a recent and notorious example of this kind of natural man. From this standpoint, he goes on to attack Hobbes' idea of a natural man, aggressive and domineering, and concludes that, just as fear drives men to fly, so signs of *mutual* fear would soon tempt them to draw nearer; not to mention the natural pleasure which any animal takes in

³⁵ See particularly Book xiv, *Of Laws in their relation with the nature of the Climate*, where his geographical learning is most displayed, and Book xi, of *Slavery*, and Book xvi, of *Domestic Slavery*.

the society of its kind. His four "laws of nature," therefore are (1) the sense of weakness; (2) the sense of hunger and desire to satisfy it; (3) the sense of mutual support; (4) the natural need of society in the sense of mere acquaintance. This last alone is purely human.

It will be seen at once that three of these are concerned merely with the maintenance of an animal life, and that so far, Montesquieu is arguing on the lines of a purely zoological psychology. It will also be clear that in the fourth "law of nature" he is either begging the question that man is a social animal, or else he is appealing to experience of actual human societies.

Montesquieu does not leave us long in doubt which is to be his line of argument. In the very next chapter he argues that "as soon as men are in association they lose the feeling of weakness; the equality which existed between them ceases, and the state of war begins. Each separate society comes to feel its strength, and this produces a state of war of nation against nation." For there must be different peoples. This last point, however, he does not attempt to prove.

Therefore there arise laws, in the relations in which these nations stand to one another; and these are the "Law of Nations"—the *Jus Gentium*.

All peoples have a law of nations. *Even the Iroquois*, who eat their prisoners, have one. They send and accept ambassies, they recognise laws of war and laws of peace. The only trouble is that *this* law of nations is not founded on the right principles.

Here then, as was by this time inevitable for a Frenchman, Montesquieu is once more face to face with the Iroquois. Their "law of nations," it is true, "is not founded on the right principles"; but a law of nature they have got; and this is his proof that there *is* a law of nature. But clearly he only proves this if we are to assume that the Iroquois are in the state of nature; or at any rate so near to it as to be a fair sample of what human behaviour would be, untrammelled by any positive or non-natural law.

Montesquieu, therefore, like his predecessors, not only takes full account of recorded observations of barbarous peoples, but is directly and specifically guided in his argument by the last new thing in current anthropology, the Iroquois of French Canada, as revealed by Lafitau in 1724.

French Canada, however, is only a salient instance of the fascination which America in general was exercising.

The reason why there are so many savage people in America is that the soil there produces so many kinds of fruit on which one can subsist. If the women there dig up a bit of ground round their cabin, the maize comes up of its own accord. Hunting and fishing are enough to keep man in abundance. Besides, herbivorous animals, such as cattle, buffalos, and the like, succeed there better than carnivorous beasts. The latter have had dominion from all time in Africa.³⁶

Here the African lion and his human counterpart, Ischia of Tombutum, is detected fading away before the maize-cultivating, ruminant-hunting American, and the way is being cleared "by recent research" for the reckless, fearless "Carib" of Rousseau. He notes, also, in Book XI, the social effects of the lack of domesticable animals:

There is this difference between savage and barbarous peoples, that the former compose small scattered tribes, which for certain special reasons cannot unite; whereas barbarous peoples ordinarily compose small tribes which can unite. The former generally produce hunting peoples, the latter, pastorals;

and so on, through a great mass of material, and (still more) of broadly valid generalization, on which the work of a large and industrious school of French anthropological sociologists has done little more than comment and refine in detail. Earlier writers had been precluded from this continental contrast between hunters and pastorals by the belief, current in Heylin's time (*Microcosmus* 1636, p. 771, cf. 782) that there were pastoral peoples in Northwest America; an indication, as was believed, of their Tartar origin.

³⁶ Montesquieu, Book IX.

Rousseau

Rousseau, I need hardly say, remains something of a puzzle. Like his predecessors, he comes at the subject of the state of nature, in the first instance, as a reformer and a political philosopher; and I am bound to say that it is only in proportion as he feels the need of illustration, and realises that his whole case is hypothetical, that he is driven back upon ethnology as an ornament of style and as a makeshift for proof. Unlike his predecessors, however, he cannot be given credit for great learning on the point at issue, and he frankly admits as much: "As we know so little of Nature and agree so ill as to the meaning of the word Law, it would be difficult to settle on a good definition of the Law of Nature." There was, however, a good deal known about nature in 1753 which was not in Rousseau's philosophy. Yet he had clearly read travels, as everyone did in those days, and he reproduces a few details as to the qualities and customs of savages.

He quotes Peron's *Voyages aux Terres Australes* for the comparative strength of Europeans and Tasmanians, and illustrates sensory acuity from Hottentots and Redskins; but his favourite type is the Carib, whom we have already met in discussing Defoe. It is the Carib of Venezuela who shows such surprising skill in tackling wild animals; it is, too, "the inhabitant of the banks of the Orinoco," who learned the use of "those boards which he applies to the temples of his children, and which assure to them at least part of their natural idiocy and happiness." It is the Carib again who "sells his cotton mattress in the morning and comes with tears in the evening to buy it back, for lack of foresight that he was going to want it for the coming night," and whose happiness is, nevertheless, so quaintly compared with that of a European Minister of State. There is a curiously Amazonian flavour, meanwhile, about Rousseau's sketch of the primitive family.

The most ancient of all societies, and the most nearly natural, is that of the family. But even here the children do not stay bound

to the parent any longer than they need him for their own maintenance. As soon as this need ceases, the natural tie dissolves. The children, released from the obedience which they owed to the father, the father released from the care which he owed to the children, all return equally to independence. This common liberty is a consequence of human nature.

Such an analysis is, of course, only true in fact under the conditions of a tropical forest. Nowhere else does the family tie break down in the way Rousseau describes; and nowhere was this type of social anarchy more open to study than in the equatorial forests of South America.

Whence did Rousseau acquire his conception of the Carib? The most obvious source would be the 17th volume of the Abbé Prévost's *Histoire générale des voyages*, which contains a full summary of the "Origin, Character, and Customs" of the Caribs, and a narrative of European colonisation of the Antilles; but this volume does not seem to have been published till 1761. Raynal's *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes*, published in Geneva in 1781, is also too late; but Raynal in particular had a wide acquaintance, and his ideas were current in French society long before his book came out; so we are probably safe in crediting Rousseau with at all events a gossiping acquaintance with a type of savagery which was enjoying a considerable vogue in his time.

'Wild Peter'

Both Rousseau and Montesquieu were, of course, also in a position to enjoy the perplexities of the advocates and assailants of the doctrine of innate ideas when a real live specimen of *Homo sapiens ferus* turned up in the Hanoverian forests in the year 1724 and was canonized as a natural species by Linnaeus. The story of Wild Peter is probably familiar reading, but though the literature which this poor creature provoked is in parts diverting both to the anthropologist and to the philosopher, I should encumber my story unduly if I digressed. Montesquieu, having been in England and having his friends in Lon-

don, has not very much to say; but Rousseau gives Wild Peter a long note, and was evidently considerably impressed. Buffon's gyrations around this rather delicate topic are more entertaining than philosophical.

The South Sea Islanders

Rousseau wrote just too early to be able to make use of what must have appeared to his contemporaries a remarkable confirmation of his view of the state of nature—namely, the discovery by Cook, Bougainville, and La Pérouse of the Polynesian Islanders. But this discovery, coming as it did so closely after Rousseau's manifesto, and so markedly confirming certain phases of his sketch, seems to have attracted some attention and to have been given more than its due weight. For it came, at all events to the public mind, as the revelation of a new type of man and society, still more remote from contact with the modern world even than the Carib and the Iroquois, still more likely therefore to have withstood the attacks of reason, if not of time, and consequently to have preserved some traces of the original state. The South Seas had, of course, been traversed cursorily since the days of Magellan; Dampier had done much to make their natives known; and I have indicated the share which his work may have had in forming the portrait of Man Friday. But it was not till after the publication of Rousseau's *Discourse* that the significance of these data was appreciated; and ethnology owes much in this instance to philosophy for the impulse which was given in the generation which follows to the study of "Pacific Man", in more senses than one; though I think the debt is in part repaid when we see what Herder owes to ethnology.

The Pacific Islanders, of course, with their Garden of Eden existence, challenged all preconceived notions of the defective mentality of races remote from Europe, and effected an almost Copernican revolution in the self-centered ethnology of the discoverers. If a South Sea Islander like Omai could pick up

English, play chess, and behave like a gentleman after a few months' consort with Europeans, there could not be much amiss with his mind; and it was clearly time to amend current conceptions as to the identity of the primitive with the remote.

George Forster, for example, who wrote the first really philosophical account of the voyages of Captain Cook, with whom his father had sailed as one of the chief naturalists of the expedition, was completely convinced by his experiences that the Biblical record was true after all, and that the primitive state of man was a state of innocence and happiness. It was a reaction against the ideas of Hobbes, Locke, and Montesquieu, which went far beyond what was contemplated even by Rousseau, and it did more to retard the progress both of anthropology and a general biology than anything else in that century.

So long as the sentimental enthusiasm aroused by Rousseau persisted, there was little hope of advance in the direction of a solid ethnology. But in England the contagion was slighter, the contact with the facts of exploration closer, and the reaction earlier; and Germany too was already well awake, with Herder, almost before the Revolution was ablaze.

"I take this opportunity," writes Chamisso, who had himself been in the Pacific in 1815-18,³⁷

"to protest most vigorously against the term savage in its application to the South Sea Islanders. I prefer, so far as I can, to connect definite ideas to the words which I use. A savage for me is the man who in the absence of fixed abode, agriculture, and domestic animals, knows no form of property but his weapons, with which he maintains himself by the chase. Wherever the South Sea Islanders can be accused of corruption of morals, this seems to me to bear indication not of savagery but of over-civilisation. The various inventions, coinage, writing, and the like, which are appropriate to mark off the different degrees of civilisation which the peoples of our continent have attained, cease to afford under conditions so different any standard for this insular and isolated stock which lives under this happy sky, without yesterday or to-morrow, living for the moment, and for pleasure."

³⁷ Chamisso, *Works* I, 119.

Voltaire

I must leave out of consideration here the results of these successive pictures of the pre-social state on the course of political philosophy. All I am concerned to do here is to give reasons why these different conceptions took the particular shape that they did, under the several circumstances of the age which gave birth to them; and I hope that I have been able to show that one of the principal factors which determined their form was the actual state of anthropological knowledge in the years which immediately preceded the publication of each.

A good example—if this were the time to develop it fully—is the very entertaining controversy between Rousseau and Voltaire over the psychical unity and uniformity of man. What led Voltaire to a conception of the state of nature so totally opposite to that entertained by Rousseau? Partly, of course, his own political and philosophic standpoint, with which we are not concerned directly here; but partly also the circumstances that in the years which immediately preceded his attack upon Rousseau, the learned world of Europe—and learned France in particular—had come under the influence of a fashion—I might almost call it a craze—of enthusiastic admiration of China and things Chinese. The Jesuit Missions to China, in particular, had been sending home wonderful accounts of the civilisation of the Chinese, and fabulous versions of its antiquity; and it was, of course, common knowledge in Europe in the eighteenth century that any civilisation which went back into the second and third thousand years B. C. must be in respectably close contact with the origin of man, and therefore might be expected to reflect at close quarters the outlines of the original state. To find, therefore, that this immemorial civilisation of China had existed apparently unchanged since its first ages, was to discover fresh light on the nature of man and a new glimpse of primitive society. By this revelation of China, it is true, the Pharaoh's heart of the *ancien régime* was hardened in pursuit of what has come down into our vocabulary as *chinoiserie*; and, by a strange

irony, one of the acutest critics of that *régime* was furnished from the same source with a fresh instrument of proof of the essentially social nature of man in reply to the Nihilism of Rousseau:

Do you mean by primitive man (*sauvages*) a two-footed animal, walking on its hands too if occasion calls, isolated, wandering in the forests, pairing at hazard, forgetting the woman with which he has mated, knowing neither her offspring nor his parents, living like a beast, only without the instinct and the resources of the beasts? You will find it in books that this state is the true estate of man, and that we have merely degenerated pitifully since we left it. But I do not think that this solitary life ascribed to our forefathers is in human nature at all. If I am not mistaken, we are in the first rank of the gregarious animals, much as bees, wasps, and the like. If you come across a strayed bee, ought you to infer that this bee is in the state of mere nature, and that those which work in association in the hive have degenerated? All men do live in Society: can you infer from that, that there was a time when they did not?

Man in general has always been what he is. That does not mean that he has always had fine cities and so on: but he has always had the same instinct which leads him to feel affection for himself, for the companion of his toils, for his children, and so forth. That is what never changes, from one end of the world to the other. As the basis of society is always in existence, there always is some society. We were not made to live after the manner of bears. [A clear hit at the favourite simile of Montesquieu.] It is therefore demonstrated that Nature alone inspires us with the useful conceptions which precede all our thoughts. In morals it is the same. We all have two instincts which are the basis of society, pity and justice.³⁸

From this fundamental uniformity of the human mind, which Voltaire assumes and defends, it follows that certain fundamental ideas recur everywhere, under suitable circumstances, more especially such religious dogmas as the conception of the immortality of the soul. In this conception it will be seen that Voltaire at the same time reverts almost completely to the anthropological standpoint of Aristotle, and anticipates by a century the philosophic position of Bastian. But it is also clear that Voltaire's mode of arriving at the natural state of man does

³⁸ Voltaire *Œuvres*, XI, 19, 21; see also Rousseau's reply to this position, *Discours sur l'origine et les fondemens de l'inégalité parmi les hommes*, p. 170.

not differ in its method from that of his predecessors. Both alike discover it by the process of subtracting from human nature, as we know it, all that can be traced to the operation of any positive prescription or observance. What each side finds lying behind this customary stratum of human nature, whether sheer passivity, or positive qualities of a selfish tendency, or otherwise, depends as before, partly on the prejudices of the observer, but mainly on the current phase of emphasis on this or that section of what was known.

Christopher Meiners

The new attitude towards Rousseau is well illustrated by the criticism of Christopher Meiners, whose *Historical Comparison of the Customs and Constitutions, the Laws and Industries, the Trade and Religion, the Sciences and Educational Institutions of the Middle Ages* was published at Hanover in 1793. "Experience, history, and sound reason," he says, "are mishandled [by Rousseau] with unprecedented audacity. On all sides false or distorted facts are treated as fundamental, and the best known and best attested observations are misinterpreted or left on one side."³⁹ "Among the poets of enlightened peoples there is hardly to be found any fiction so utterly in conflict with experience and history as Rousseau's picture of the State of Nature, and of Natural Man." But Meiners' criticism is directed wholly against Rousseau's ignorance of anthropological fact, and most particularly of facts about "modern savages"; not against the principles of his method. For, as Meiners himself contends,

The most important conditions in which considerable sections of the human race have been or are now to be found, are the conditions of savagery and barbarism, of incipient, or half-completed, or entire enlightenment. . . . Human history devotes its particular attention to the savages and barbarians of all parts of the world, who have never produced the smallest perceptible change in the fortunes of humanity as a whole; because often a single small horde of savages and barbarians can make greater contributions to the knowledge of human

³⁹ Vol. I, pp. 7, 16, 18.

nature than the most magnificent peoples who ever conquered and devastated a continent.

And Meiners goes on to hit also Montesquieu for his failure to appreciate the contribution of savages to political philosophy. Here we have clearly the beginnings of the modern comparative method, with its search of uncontaminated survivals of primitive, though not strictly pre-social states.

Herder

But it is mainly to Herder that the expression of the new movement is due; and it is his *Thoughts on the History of Mankind*⁴⁰ that makes the first sympathetic attempt to solve the problem of the development of man and his culture, and to create, in the modern sense, a science of man.

Already in comparatively early years, [he says] when the field of knowledge lay before me in all that morning glory from which life's midday sun detracts so much, the idea often besets me, since everything in the world has its philosophy and science, ought not human history, which after all lies nearest to ourselves, to have in a general sense its philosophy and science also?

He argues, thereupon, that we must discard speculation and follow experience simply.

When, therefore, we set about philosophising upon the history of our species, let us forswear, as far as possible, all narrow forms of thought which are derived from the culture of a single region, or even of a single school. It is not what man is among ourselves, nor what he ought to be in the conception of any dreamer whatever [this is clearly aimed at Rousseau] but what he is, on the earth in general, and at the same time in every single region in particular; or rather, what it is to which the rich multiplicity of accidents in the hands of Nature has had the power to train him. This is what we are to regard as the purpose of Nature for him.

⁴⁰ Herder, *Ideen zur Geschichte der Menschheit*, 1784. On Herder's interpretation of the American evidence, see Learned, *Herder and America*, in *American Annals*, N. S. II, 9. (Philadelphia, 1904): and on his sources in general, Grundmann, *Die Geographischen und Völkerkundlichen Quellen in Herder's Ideen*, Berlin, 1900.

Herder, that is, conceives it as possible, at the same time to determine inductively what man is in himself, and to determine by simple description what he actually is (or rather what *men* actually *are*) under the various different conditions in which we find him. But he insists on the distinction between these two modes of regarding man, or men; and rightly, for it is the confusion between the description of this or that kind of uncivilised man—Iroquois, Hottentot, or South Sea Islander—and the guess that uncivilised man everywhere *must* have such and such qualities or defects of qualities—which had in fact produced all the discrepancies between the previous theories of a pre-social state.

Writing when he did, Herder of course was but little more capable than his predecessors of delineating human nature in detail on inductive lines. His merit lies in the clearness with which he gripped and stated the conditions of the problem; in an advance of method, which came just in time to guide the theoretical treatment of a vast mass of new data. At the same time he did accomplish a good deal, even as regards the filling in of the picture. In particular, he marks the turn of the tide from the philosophy of the pre-social state towards the old Aristotelian conception of man as a social animal. Both Hobbes and Locke, though not I think anywhere named, come in for effective criticism:

There have been philosophers [he says] who on account of this instinct of self-preservation have classified our species among the carnivora, and made out its natural state to be a state of war. Of course when man plucks the fruit of a tree he is a robber; when he kills an animal he is a murderer; and when—with a footstep, with a breath, perhaps—he takes the life of myriads of invisible creatures, he is the most brutal oppressor on earth . . . But put Man among his brethren, and ask the question, Is he naturally a beast of prey of his own kind, is he an unsocial being? In his physical shape he is clearly not the former, by his birth still less the latter.

Herder is thus returning afresh to the Aristotelian conception of the parental bond as the complement and remedy

of the long helpless infancy.⁴¹ Herder's ideal man has, in fact, a humanity which is in itself an end, an ideal, not a pre-social attribute, and just for this reason humanity exist potentially in all members of the species, however small their progress towards realising it, or however eccentric the result of their social activity.

Look at the godlike laws and regulations of humanity, which emerge, if only in the merest traces, among the most savage peoples. Can they really have been invented by the exercise of reason only after the lapse of thousands of years? Can they really owe their origin to this changeful sketch, this man-made abstraction? I cannot believe it, even from the standpoint of history. If men had been distributed like animals on the earth's surface, to invent for themselves the inner form of humanity, we should still find mere human stocks, without language, without reason, without religion or morals; for as man was created such is he still upon the earth. On the contrary, neither history nor experience shows us human orang-outangs living actually anywhere: the fables which the late writer Diodorus and the still later Pliny tell us, of 'insensitive' (*ἀναισθητοί*) and other inhuman men, either betray themselves by their own fabulous quality, or at least deserve no credence on the testimony of these authorities. No European people, still more no Greek people, has ever been more savage than the New Zealander or the Fuegian, at all events when we take into account the factor of climate; and yet those inhuman tribes have reason and speech, and (in a word) humanity.

Then he turns upon Locke:

All those traits of savagery (even granting that the Hottentot buries his children alive, and the Eskimo shortens the life of his aged father), result from a melancholy necessity, which nevertheless never conquers the original instinct of humanity.

⁴¹ "He is received in the arms, and suckled at the breast, of love; he is brought up by human beings, and receives from them a thousand good things which he has never earned. To this extent is he shaped in and for Society: without it he could neither come into existence nor grow into a Man at all. At the point, too, at which he begins to be unsocial, and does violence to his own nature by coming into conflict with other living beings, he is once more no exception, but is acting in conformity with the great law of self-preservation which is found in all created things."

The Passing of the Pre-Social State

All these theories of a social contract as the starting-point of human societies presupposed, as we have seen, that mankind had actually passed through a pre-social state; and the proof which had been offered of this supposition, though partly theoretical and *a priori*, had partly also been inductive and based on experience. Further, the experience of "primitive man" which was actually open to the philosophers of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, had been, in fact, such as to force the conclusion not merely that a pre-social state had once existed, but that some barbarous peoples had not yet emerged from it. It was a sad error of observation, as we now know, which led to that conclusion; but, given the travellers' tales, in the form in which we can read them in the cosmographies and voyages of the time, I do not see how that conclusion could have been avoided without culpable neglect of such evidence as there was. If blame is to be assigned in this phase of inquiry at all, it is to be assigned to the travellers and traders, for making such poor use of their eyes and ears. All, however, that I am concerned to establish at present is this, that one of the most important and far-reaching speculations of modern political philosophy, the speculation as to a pre-social condition of mankind, and a social contract which ended it and brought in society and the state, arose directly and inevitably from the new information as to what primitive man *was* and *did*, when he was studied in the seventeenth century at Tombutum, or Saldanha Bay, or the "backwoods of America," or the "bank of the Orinoco river."

But the social contract theory has long since passed out of vogue. In natural, as in political science, it has served its purpose. Beginning, in the days of the discoveries, as a plausible hypothesis which held together a number of casual observations, and accommodated itself, perhaps all too well, to the new contributions as they came, it excused three revolutions, justified the annexation of a hemisphere, and guided

the infancy of a new science, anthropology; provoking many researches and much thought, of more permanent value than itself. Only the gradual growth of fresh standards of evidence, and fresh refinements of method detected its absurdities and confusions; till, with history and law pulling one way, and psychology the other, the doctrine of a pre-social state dissolved into its elements, and left us a mere phrase. Nowadays, when we describe a person as being in a state of nature, we mean only this, that like America on Grimstone's titlepage, he has left his clothes behind. Political consequences, indeed, of this group of theories are with us today, like the political consequences of the belief in the divine right of kings; but the theories themselves are dead, and likely to remain so. Plato and Aristotle, with their belief in man as a naturally social animal, have come by their own again, for most of us, if not for all; and the search for an ideal state, which shall realise and fulfil man's social instincts, is again in full cry.

Four new sets of problems can be distinguished all clamorous for a solution, and all failing to find this solution in the theories of a pre-social state. Herder had been driven to a new formula for the common humanity, by the diversity of the evidence about so many "primitive" peoples, and had been led to restate much of Montesquieu's geography in distinguishing between essence and accidents. The new science of geology, and in particular the researches of Boucher de Perthes (1848-1858) on the quaternary gravels of the Somme Valley, were seen to demand such a vast lapse of time since man's first appearance, that the probability vanished that any set of men now extant should have retained a "pre-social" culture. A new humanitarianism, stimulated by practical applications of Rousseau's doctrines, based part of its case on the brotherhood of man, and was met by the objection that men were not brothers, at all events when one is white and one is black. And the accidents of their birth gave Europe a new philosophy of language and of law which seemed to vindicate Aristotle on a

point where he had been most ruthlessly attacked by Hobbes, namely as to the naturalness of paternal, as opposed to maternal authority. Comparative ethnology, prehistoric archaeology, polygenism, and the patriarchal theory (the political counterpart of Aryanism) advanced on parallel lines over the ruins of the social contract. Not all these new enquiries, and appeals to fresh evidence, affected political science appreciably. Archaeology had least of all to say, for it was concerned with the productive, not with the social arts; with technology, not with institutions. Only as the humanist handmaid of geology did it lend a hand in the fight for a sane interpretation of Genesis. Herder's contribution has been estimated already; it had much to do with the first formulation of that doctrine of nationality which checked the career of Napoleon, and still is the largest force in international thought.

What part, if any, has the direct study of barbarous people played at this fresh turn of the wheel? Let us look once again at the state of geographical knowledge, and more particularly, as before, at the regions in which by transitory chance of circumstances, there was most to be learned at the moment.

The Patriarchal Theory

In the first place, economic and political causes were leading throughout the eighteenth century towards the formal declaration of European rule over large parts of India; and it was inevitable that one of the first consequences of this should be the discovery by the new rulers of India that the dominant civilization of the country was at the same time rigidly patriarchal in structure, highly intolerant of change, and apparently also of very ancient date. That the practical problems of administration were most urgent in northern India was yet another of those accidental circumstances which make and mar philosophies; for it veiled from view the peaceful southern matriarchates, and focused the attention of statesmen and theorists alike on the pugnacious patriarchs of the

north. The necessary result was the growth, in England, of a new school of comparative jurisprudence, for which Montesquieu and Blackstone had already made clear the way; which reaches its finest flower and certainly its widest vogue in the writings of Sir Henry Maine. For it was not only for the government of India that the new learning brought new light: the discovery of ancient Indian law threw the study of Roman law into an entirely new perspective, and furnished that great monument of tradition and of observation with a deep and strongly-featured background. From this new point of view, the Aristotelian doctrine as to the naturalness of patriarchal society seemed to gain new validity, as the basis of induction widened; and since early Semitic society, and the primeval society of Semitic tradition and legend, were rigidly patriarchal also, an even wider comparison, embracing India, Arabia, and ancient Europe in the same survey, seemed to justify the belief, which had always remained popular in Europe, that the primitive state of man had been neither pre-social nor nasty and brutish at all; but in the best sense "very good".

The patriarchal theory dominated political science for nearly fifty years. "The effect of the evidence derived from comparative jurisprudence," Sir Henry Maine could write in 1861,⁴²

is to establish that view of the primeval conditions of the human race which is known as the patriarchal theory. There is no doubt, of course, that this theory was originally based on the Scriptural theory of the Hebrew patriarchs in Lower Asia.⁴³ It is to be noted,

⁴² Maine, *Ancient Law*, pp. 122-3.

⁴³ Maine digresses here to deal with historical reasons for its neglect: "But, as has been explained already, its connexion with Scripture rather militated than otherwise against its reception as a complete theory, since the majority of the enquirers who till recently addressed themselves with most earnestness to the colligation of social phenomena, were either influenced by the strongest prejudice against Hebrew antiquities, or by the strongest desire to construct their system without the assistance of religious records. Even now [1861] there is perhaps a disposition to undervalue these accounts, or rather to decline generalizing from them, as forming part of the traditions of a Semitic people." *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.*

however, that the legal evidence comes nearly exclusively from the institutions of societies belonging to the Indo-European stock, the Romans, Hindoos, and Slavonians supplying the greater part of it; and indeed the difficulty, at the present stage of the inquiry, is to know where to stop; to say of what races of men it is *not* allowable to lay down that the society in which they are united was originally organised on the patriarchal model.

And he refers explicitly to the former controversy between Filmer and Locke, to point out how the tables had now been turned upon the latter.

Thus in the half-century which intervenes between Herder and Maine, the political philosophy of Europe seemed to have turned almost wholly from exploration to introspection; from the Pacific to early Rome and the German forests; and from the study of survivals in the modern practice of savages, to that of primeval custom betrayed by the speech and customs of the civilised world. It was Aristotle over again, with his appeal to custom, ancestral belief, and canonical literature, following hard upon the heels of the visionary revolutionary Plato. Maine's own words, indeed, about Rousseau^{43a} would be applicable almost without change to the course of Greek thought in the fourth century B. C.:

We have never seen in our own generation, [he says] indeed the world has not seen more than once or twice in all the course of history, a literature which has exercised such prodigious influence over the minds of men, over every cast and shade of intellect, as that which emanated from Rousseau between 1749 and 1762. It was the first attempt to re-erect the edifice of human belief after the purely iconoclastic efforts commenced by Bayle, and in part by our own Locke, and consummated by Voltaire; and besides the superiority which every constructive effort will always enjoy over one that is merely destructive, it possessed the immense advantage of appearing amid an all but universal scepticism as to the soundness of all foregone knowledge in matters speculative. . . . The great difference between the views is that one bitterly and broadly condemns the present for its unlikeness to the ideal past, while the other, assuming the present to be as necessary as the past, does not affect to disregard or censure it.

I have devoted some space to these first steps of lin-

^{43a} *Ibid.*, pp. 86-9.

guistic paleontology and comparative jurisprudence because the method of inquiry which they announced promised at first sight to make good a very serious defect in the instruments of anthropological research. Human history, outside of Europe and of one or two great oriental states like China, hardly went back beyond living memory; even Mexico had no chronicles beyond the first few hundred years, and the records of old-world states like China, which at first sight offered something, turned out on examination to have least to give. They had lived long, it is true, but their lives had been "childlike and bland," devoid of change, and almost empty of experience. Consequently there was no proof that the "wild men" of the world's margins and byways were really primitive at all. The churches held them children of wrath, degenerate offspring of Cain; the learned fell back upon pre-Adamite fictions, to palliate, rather than to explain their invincible ignorance of Europe and its ways. Here, however, in the new light thrown by the history of speech, there seemed to be a prospect of deep insight into the history of human societies. Disillusionment came in due course, when doctors disagreed; but illusion need never have taken the form it did, had either the philologists or the philosophers realised that all the really valuable work was being done within the limits of a single highly special group of tongues; that the very circumstance that this group of tongues had spread so widely, pointed to some strong impulse driving the men who spoke them into far-reaching migrations; that one of the few points upon which linguistic paleontologists were really unanimous was that both the Indo-European and the Semitic peoples, in their primitive condition, were purely pastoral; and that this pastoral habit was itself an almost coercive cause for their uniformly patriarchal organisation. The last point, however, belongs so completely to another phase of our story that it is almost an anachronism to introduce it here. It serves, however, to indicate, once again, if that be necessary, how completely the philosopher,

and even the man of science, is at the mercy of events in the ordering of his search after knowledge. It is, indeed, almost true to say that if the primitive Aryan had not had the good fortune not merely to live on a grass-land, but also to find domesticable quadrupeds there, there could no more have been a science of comparative philology in modern Europe, than there could be among the natives of your own Great Plains or of the Pacific Coast: for in no other event would there have been any such family of languages to compare.

In the absence of warning thoughts like these, however, the comparative philology and the comparative law of the patriarchal peoples of the Northwest Quadrant and of India went gaily on. What Maine had done for India, Maine himself, with Sohm and von Maurier, in Germany, Le Play, de Laveleye, and d'Arbois de Jubainville in France and Belgium, W. F. Skene in far-off Scotland, Whitley Stokes and others in Ireland, Rhys in Wales, and Mackenzie Wallace and Kovalevsky in Russia, had done for the early institutions of their respective countries; all emphasising alike the wide prevalence of the same common type of social structure, based upon the same central institution, the patriarchal family, with the *Patria Potestas* of its eldest male member as its overpowering bond of union; and Maine's own words do not the least exaggerate the beliefs and expectations which were evoked by this new aspect of the study of man.

Maine himself, indeed, seems to have realized (*l. c.*, p. 130) that "the earliest and most extensively employed of legal fictions is that which permitted family relations to be created artificially, and there is none to which I conceive mankind to be more deeply indebted;" and a similar fiction was extensively employed by comparative ethnologists as well, to explain away cases which did not seem to come under the rule. Yet only on one point does Maine seem to hesitate at all:

The conclusion then which is supported by the evidence is, not that all early societies were formed by descent from the same ancestor,

but that all of them which had any permanence or solidity were so descended, or assumed that they were. An indefinite number of causes may have shattered the primitive groups, but wherever their ingredients recombined, it was on the model or principle of an association of kindred. Whatever were the facts, all thought, language, and law adjusted themselves to the assumption. (*l. c.*, pp. 131-2.)

No feature of the rudimentary associations of mankind is deposed to by a greater amount of evidence than this; and yet none seems to have disappeared so generally and so rapidly from the usages of advancing communities. (*l. c.*, p. 135.)

Yet even this sweeping generalization is supported only by examples from Indo-European peoples. It is Aristotle's assumption, over again, of the universality of the Greek city-state, an organism as rigidly delimited by geographical and economic circumstances as the patriarchal family itself.

Comparative Philology delimits the "Aryan Home"

The "Indo-European" challenge to the comparative study of the patriarchal societies was accompanied, step by step, by another Indo-European parallel of hardly less importance. It was forced, indeed, into greater absurdities by its more enthusiastic advocates, but embracing as it did the whole range of the nameable works of man, it led inevitably, at the last, back to the consideration of geographic environment and to a realization of the local limitations of the Indo-European régime, extensive though its frontiers were. There had been intermittent speculation, from the sixteenth century onward, as to the significance, and the probable cause, of the resemblances which every scholar felt to exist between languages so remote geographically as German and Persian; but it was not until the discovery of Sanskrit—itsself an immediate fruit of the British occupation of India—that the proof became convincing that the resemblances between the languages of the Greeks, Romans, and Teutons, on the one hand, and of the Sanskrit-speaking lords of northern India on the other, were such as to show that these languages were derived from a common source: that it was the differences between them, not their resemblances, which stood in need of

explanation by the secondary and subsequent action of time, climate, and customs. This conclusion was reached independently and almost simultaneously by Sir William Jones in 1786,⁴⁴ by Frater Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo in 1798,⁴⁵ and by Johann Christoph Adelung in 1806.⁴⁶ The last-named, by the way, had already in 1781⁴⁷ carried war into the other camp by his attack on the prevalent tradition that the earliest and only original language of mankind was Hebrew; and he remained in the belief that there was no case yet for enthroning any other language in its place; "Noah's Ark, for me, is a closed fortress," he said; "and the ruins of Babylon need fear no molestation from me."⁴⁸ But his successors were less cautious, and Noah's Ark seemed likely to float far away from Ararat, upon a new flood of philological literature. Rhode⁴⁹ seems to have been the first, in 1820, to draw from linguistic similarities geographical conclusions as to an "Aryan Home," which he placed in Central Asia. Lassen⁵⁰ in 1847, proposed southwestern Persia as an analogous "Home of the Semites", and lent his great authority to the hypothesis of a common place of origin for the primitive Semites and Aryans. Crawfurd⁵¹ meanwhile in 1820 had applied the same new science of comparative philology to the principal linguistic groups of the Pacific, Polynesian and Malay; and was one of the very first to take the further step, and argue that if two peoples retained the same names for things, they must be held to have had those things in use and in mind, before they became separated in language

⁴⁴ Sir Wm. Jones, in *Asiatick Researches*, I, p. 422.

⁴⁵ Fa. Paulinus, *Dissertatio de antiquitate et affinitate linguarum zendicarum, sanscriticarum, et germanicarum*, Padua, 1798.

⁴⁶ J. C. Adelung, *Mithradates oder allegemeine Sprachenkunde* I, Berlin, 1806.

⁴⁷ J. C. Adelung, *Ueber die Geschichte der deutschen Sprache*, Leipzig, 1781.

⁴⁸ J. C. Adelung, *Mithradates* I, p. 11.

⁴⁹ J. G. Rhode, *Die heilige Sage des Zendvolkes*, Frankfurt, 1820.

⁵⁰ Ch. Lassen, *Indische Alterthumskunde*, 1847.

⁵¹ J. Crawfurd, *History of the Indian Archipelago*, London, 1820.

or abode. Crawford's sketch of aboriginal Polynesian society and culture deals mainly, it is true, with material arts and means of subsistence; and Von Klaproth's⁵² application of the same method in 1830 to Indo-European languages turned on the names of plants. Eichhoff was the first to show, by systematic parallel lists of words for the family and society, how "this rich and tenacious civilization propagated itself in a thousand different degrees, but always in similar stocks and in regular ramifications, . . . over the enormous area that civilization now covers, and whose borders are daily extending"; but it was Kuhn⁵³ in 1845 who finally wedded comparative philology with comparative law, by his proposal "to advance from the conclusion that all these great peoples are related to one another, to a further conclusion, the establishment of the main features of the state of the original people in the days before they separated." Kuhn's work, however, brilliant as it was, was superseded within three years by a philologist of the first rank, Jacob Grimm,⁵⁴ and it was Kuhn's second edition, which appeared in 1850, almost wholly re-written, which is the real cornerstone of linguistic paleontology; his *Journal for the Comparative Philology of German, Greek and Latin*⁵⁵ was founded in the following year, 1851, and it is this mass of materials which underlay the first popular application of the new method to classical studies, in Mommsen's great *History of Rome*,⁵⁶ which began to appear in 1854.

Kuhn's argument was restated and carried somewhat further by Benfey, in his preface to Fick's *Vergleichendes Wörterbuch der Indogermanischen Sprachen*, which appeared in 1868. By

⁵² J. von Klaproth, *Nouveau Journal Asiatique*, p. 112, 1830. *Asia Polyglotta* 1831.

⁵³ A. Kuhn, *Zur ältesten Geschichte der Indo-Germanischen Völker*, Berlin, 1845 (second edition, 1850), p. 2.

⁵⁴ Grimm, *Geschichte der deutschen Sprache*, 1848.

⁵⁵ Kuhn, *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung auf dem Gebiete des deutschen, griechischen und lateinischen*.

⁵⁶ Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte*, Berlin, 1854.

this time the archeological evidence for the antiquity of some kind of man in Europe had been summarized and made accessible in Lubbock's *Pre-historic Times* (1862): and this of course made impossible for ever such a position in regard to the population of Europe as had been taken by Mommsen in regard to Italy only three years before.

Geiger's analysis of the Indo-European tree names, a further revision of Kuhn's work, appeared in 1871,⁵⁷ and makes a positive claim for an Aryan home "somewhere in Europe", namely in central and western Germany; one of the first fruits in the long recrimination between anthropologists east and west of the Rhine, which followed the Franco-Prussian War.

A further important step belongs also to the year 1871.⁵⁸ Kuno was, I think, the first to lay stress on the consideration that a *family* of languages presupposed not merely a single original language, but geographical circumstances favorable to its gradual differentiation, and at the same time to its essential coherence. Such geographical conditions, he pointed out, were realized only by a wide featureless area, uniform in character and temperate in climate. Such areas exist only in the great grass lands of the Old World, and the distribution of these accord with the linguistic evidence as to the geographical range and pastoral habit of the primitive Aryan, and may very likely be found to account for these. Consequently he was inclined to indicate as the "Aryan Home" the great plains of southeastern Europe.

Kuno's introduction of a geographical factor into the controversy is itself characteristic of a great contemporary movement in German geography, the first extension of which to criticism of the philologists is the essay of J. Schmidt published in 1872,⁵⁹ and the latest a paper of F. Ratzel in 1904. But this anticipates

⁵⁷ Geiger, *Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Menschheit*, Stuttgart, 1871.

⁵⁸ Kuno, *Forschungen in Gebiete der alten Völkerkunde*, Berlin, 1871.

⁵⁹ J. Schmidt, *Die Verwandschaftsverhältnisse der Indogermanischen Sprachen*, Weimar, 1872.

the order of events. It was less the geographers than the ethnologists who wrecked the patriarchal theory.

The Matriarchate in Southern India, Africa, and North America

The patriarchal theory lasted barely fifty years. It had owed its revival, as we have seen, to two fresh branches of research, comparative jurisprudence and comparative philology, both stimulated directly by the results of European administration in northern India. It owed its decline to the results of similar inquiries in other parts of the world, stimulated no less directly by other phases of the great colonising movement, which marks, above all other things, the century from 1760 to 1860. Here again a small number of examples stand out as the crucial instances. British administration in India had, of course, been extended over the non-Aryan south, as well as over the north; and in Travancore, and other parts of the Madras Presidency, British commissioners found themselves confronted with types of society which showed the profoundest disregard of the patriarchal theory. Like the Lycians of Herodotus, these perverse people "called themselves after their mothers' names": they honoured their mother and neglected their father, in society, and government, as well as in their homes; their administration, their law, and their whole mode of life rested on the assumption that it was the women, not the men, in whom reposed the continuity of the family and the authority to govern the state. Here was a *parecbasis*, a perverted type of society, worthy of Aristotle himself. It is a type which, as a matter of fact, is widely distributed in southern and southeastern Asia, and had been repeatedly described by travellers from the days of Tavernier (in Borneo) and Laval (before 1679 in the Maldivé Islands), if not earlier still. It existed also in the New World and Lafitau had already compared the Iroquois with the ancient Lycians. But it was Buchanan's account of the Nairs of the Malabar Coast, published in 1807,⁶⁰ which came at the psychological moment, and

⁶⁰ Buchanan, F., *A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara, and Malabar*, 3 vols, 1807.

first attracted serious attention. At the other extremity of India, also, analogous customs were being recorded, about the same time, by Samuel Turner in Tibet, which might have given pause at the outset to the speculators who hoped to base general conclusions on anything so special and peculiar as the customs of Aryan India.

Similar evidence came pouring in during the generation which followed; partly, it is true, as the result of systematic search among older travelers, but mainly through the intense exploitation of large parts of the world by European traders and colonists. Conspicuous instances are the Negro societies of western and equatorial Africa, first popularised by the republication of William Bosman's *Guinea* (1700), in Pinkerton's *General Collection of Voyages and Travels* (London, 1808, &c.), and by Proyart's *Histoire de Loango* (1776), which also reached the English public in the same invaluable collection. But it was from the south that the new African material came most copiously, in proportion as the activity of explorers, missionaries, and colonists was greater. Thunberg's account of the Bechuanas⁶¹ takes the lead here; but for English thought the principal authorities are, of course, John Mackenzie⁶² and David Livingstone.⁶³

It was not to be expected that America, which had made such remarkable contributions to the study of man in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,⁶⁴ should fall behind in the nineteenth, when its vast resources of mankind, as of nature's gifts, were being realised at last. From Hunter,⁶⁵ Gallatin,⁶⁶ and School-

⁶¹ Pinkerton, vol. xvi.

⁶² John Mackenzie, *Ten Years North of the Orange River* (1859-69), Edinburgh, 1871.

⁶³ David Livingstone, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi and its Tributaries* (1858-64), London, 1865.

⁶⁴ The harvest of the earlier period is gathered up in F. X. Charlevoix, *Histoire et description de la Nouvelle France*, 6 vols, Paris, 1744; *Histoire de Paraguay*, 6 vols, Paris, 1756.

⁶⁵ Hunter, *Manners and Customs of several Indian Tribes located West of the Mississippi*, Philadelphia, 1823.

⁶⁶ Gallatin, *Archæologia Americana*, Philadelphia (from 1820 onwards).

craft,⁶⁷ in the twenties, to Lewis Morgan⁶⁸ in 1865, there was hardly a traveller "out West" who did not bring back some fresh example of society destructive of the patriarchal theory.

As often happens in such cases, more than one survey of the evidence was in progress simultaneously. Bachofen was the first to publish,⁶⁹ and it is curious that his great book on "Mother-right" appeared in the very same year as Maine's *Ancient Law*. Lubbock's *Pre-historic Times*, in the next year, represents the same movement of thought in England in a popular shape, but almost independently. In America, Lewis Morgan, whom I have noted already as an able interpreter of Iroquois custom, followed up his detailed studies of Redskin law by a Smithsonian monograph in 1871 on *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family*, and, in 1877, by his book on *Ancient Society*. Meanwhile Post had published his great work on the *Evolution of Marriage*⁷⁰ in 1875, and J. F. McLennan his first *Studies in Ancient History* in 1876. It was the generation of Darwin and of the great philologists, as we have seen, and survivals were in the air: Dargan⁷¹ pointed out traces of the matriarchate in the law and custom of Germany, and Wilken⁷² in those of early Arabia. The period of exploration, if I may so term it, closed on this aspect of the subject with Westermarck's *History of Human Marriage*, which was published in London in 1891.

Australian Evidence: Totemism and Classificatory Kinship

I have now mentioned India, South Africa, and North America, three principal fields of English-speaking enterprise during the nineteenth century, and have indicated the con-

⁶⁷ Schoolcraft, *Travels in the Central Portions of the Mississippi Valley* (New York, 1825); *Notes on the Iroquois* (1846).

⁶⁸ Lewis H. Morgan, *Proc. Am. Acad. Arts and Sciences*, vii, 1865-8.

⁶⁹ Bachofen, *Das Mutter-recht*, Stuttgart, 1861.

⁷⁰ Hermann Post, *Die Geschlechts-genossenschaft der Urzeit und die Entstehung der Ehe*, Oldenburg, 1875.

⁷¹ Dargan, *Mutter-recht und Raubehe und ihre Reste im Germanischen Recht und Leben*, Breslau, 1883.

⁷² Wilken, *Das Matriarchat bei den alten Arabern*, Leipzig, 1884.

tribution of each to modern anthropology in its bearing on political science. Only Australia remains; and, though Australia's task has been shared more particularly with North America, I shall be doing no injustice to Lewis Morgan or to McLennan if I couple with their names those of Fison and Howitt,⁷³ as the discoverers of classical instances of societies which observe neither paternal nor maternal obligations of kinship as we understand them, but have adopted those purely artificial systems of relationships which in moments of elation we explain as totemic, or, in despair, describe as classificatory.

Hermann Post: Comparative Jurisprudence

Our retrospect, therefore, of the last fifty years shows clearly once again how intimately European colonisation and anthropological discoveries have gone hand in hand: first to establish a matriarchal theory of society as a rival of the patriarchal; and then to confront both views alike with the practices and with the theory of totemism.

From the point of view of political science, all this mass of inquiries finds applications already in more departments than one; though it is probably still too early to appraise its influence adequately. The new Montesquieu has not yet arisen to interpret to us the *Spirit of the Laws*. Most directly, perhaps, we can trace such influence in the *Comparative Jurisprudence* of Hermann Post, whose first work on the *Evolution of Marriage* appeared, as we have seen, in 1875. Post's general attitude is best seen in his *Introduction to the Study of Ethnological Jurisprudence*, which was published in 1886, and in his *African Jurisprudence* of 1887.⁷⁴ As the result of a survey of social organ-

⁷³ Fison and Howitt, *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, Melbourne and Sydney, 1880.

⁷⁴ Hermann Post, *Einleitung in das Studium der ethnologischen Jurisprudenz* (Oldenburg 1886); *Afrikanische Jurisprudenz* (1887). His position is however already clear in his first synthetic work, *Der Ursprung des Rechts*, 1876, as well as in his earlier book on marriage. For a good summary of Post's views see Th. Achelis, *Die Entwicklung der modernen Ethnologie* (Berlin, 1889), p. 113-123, and the same writer's *Moderne Ethnologie* (1896).

isations, considered as machinery in motion, Post points out very justly that it is useless to attempt to explain social phenomena on the basis of psychological activities of individuals, as is too commonly assumed, because all individuals whose conduct we can possibly observe have themselves been educated in some society or other, and presume in all their social acts the assumptions on which that society itself proceeds.

"I take the legal customs of all peoples of the earth," so he wrote in 1884,⁷⁵ "the residual outcome of living legal consciousness of humanity, for the starting-point of my inquiry into the science of law; and then, on that basis, I propound the question, What is law? If by this road I arrive eventually at an abstract conception of law, or at an idea of law, then the whole fabric so created consists, from base to summit, of flesh and blood."

It is the same method, of course, which had already yielded such remarkable results to Montesquieu and even to Locke. The point of view is no longer that of a Maine or a McLennan, students of patriarchal or of matriarchal institutions by themselves. It is that of a spectator of human society as a whole; and such a point of view became possible at all only when it was already certain that no great section of humanity remained altogether unexplored, however fragmentary our knowledge might still be, of much that we ought to have recorded. And its immediate outcome has been to throw into the strongest possible relief the dependence of the form and still more of the actual content of all human societies on something which is not in the human mind at all, but is the infinite variety of that external nature which society exists to fend off from man, and also to let man dominate if he can.

This was, of course, already the standpoint of Comte, with his emphasis on the *monde ambiant*. But Comte, the citizen of a state which except in Canada had failed to colonise, and therefore had little direct contact with non-European types of society, confined himself far too exclusively to European data. His

⁷⁵ Post, *Die Grundlagen des Rechts* (1884).

strength is precisely where the science of France was so magnificently strong in his day, in the domain of pure physics; it is his analogies between politics and physics which are so illuminating in his work, as in that of his English compeer, Herbert Spencer;⁷⁶ and it is the weakness of both in the direction of anthropology which mainly accounts for the shortness of their respective vogues.

Friedrich Ratzel: Anthro-po-geography

At the point which we have now reached in this rapid survey of our science, it was obviously to geography—the systematic study of those external forces of nature as an ordered whole—that anthropology stretched out its hands; and it did not ask in vain. But while English geography had remained exploratory, descriptive, and (like English geology) *historical* in its outlook, the new German science of *Erdkunde*—“earth-knowledge” in the widest sense of the word—had already come into being on the basis of the labours of Ritter and the two Humboldts, and under the guidance of such men as Wagner, Richthofen, and Bastian; the last-named also an anthropologist of the first rank. It was, thus, to a distinguished pupil of Wagner, Friedrich Ratzel, that anthropology owed, more than to any other man, the next forward step on these lines. In Ratzel’s mind, history and geography went hand in hand as the precursors of a scientific anthropology.⁷⁷ History to define *when*, and in what order, man makes his conquests over nature; geography to show *where*, and within what limits, nature presents a conquerable field for man. Much of this, of course, was already implicit in the teaching of Adolf Bastian, whose monumental volumes on *Man in History* had appeared at Leipzig as early as 1860; his *Contributions to Comparative Psychology* in 1868; and his *Legal Relations*

⁷⁶ Compare Quetelet’s *Essai de physique sociale* (1841), as a symptom of the trend of French thought at this stage.

⁷⁷ Ratzel, *Anthropo-geographie*, Leipzig, vol. i, 1882; ii, 1891.

among the *Different Peoples of the Earth* in 1872⁷⁸—three years before Post's first essay. But Bastian, inaccessible for years together in Tibet or Polynesia, was rather an inspiration to a few intimate colleagues than a great propagandist; and besides, it was not till the appearance of his *Doctrine of the Geographical Provinces* in 1886⁷⁹ that he touched on this precise ground, and by that time Ratzel's *History of Man* had already been out for a year.⁸⁰

Polygenism and Slavery

Hitherto we have been concerned with that social or cultural aspect of anthropology which deals with what men *do* and how they order their lives; and so lies obviously on the frontiers of political science. Yet one of the most striking instances of interaction concerns the other half of the science of man, the study, namely, of what men *are* in their physical breed, as members of the animal kingdom. At first sight this enquiry lies remote enough from politics. Yet throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, and about the very cradle of physical anthropology, was played a controversial comedy in which it is difficult to say whether anthropology or politics did more, at the moment, to misguide and deform the other. The question which the anthropologist was asked to decide was this: "Is there but one kind of man, or are there two or more?" The use which the politician meant to make of the answer was to determine the rightness or wrongness of Negro slavery.

Until the latter part of the eighteenth century, no one had doubted, so far as I can discover, that Man, so far as he could be regarded as animal at all, formed a single indivisible species.

⁷⁸ Bastian, *Der Mensch in der Geschichte* (Leipzig, 1860); *Beiträge zur vergleichenden Psychologie* (Berlin, 1868); *Rechtsverhältnisse bei verschiedenen Völkern der Erde* (Berlin, 1872).

⁷⁹ Bastian, *Zur Lehre von den geographischen Provinzen*, Berlin, 1886.

⁸⁰ Ratzel, *Völkerkunde* (Leipzig, 1885). His method is best studied in the first volume of his *Anthropo-geographie* (Leipzig, 1882).

The anthropologies of Greece and Egypt had rested on the rough generalization (which was in fact true for the original field of observation round the Mediterranean Sea), that well-marked types of complexion, red, yellow, white, and black, were characteristic of accepted geographical regions, Egypt, Asia, Europe, and Africa. Such, too, was the first modern grouping suggested by F. Bernier in 1672; and such in essentials were those of Buffon in 1749, and Linnaeus in 1755. Linnaeus indeed had been much impressed by "Wild Peter", as we have seen, and had included *Homo ferus* in his *System of Nature*, out of sheer excess of precaution. Buffon never seems quite to have made up his mind whether there were wild men or no. But this was beside the point. The slave-owning eighteenth century knew quite well that Negroes and Chinamen were no more *Homo ferus* than they were chimpanzees, and justified enslavement as Aristotle had justified it of old, on the ground that, if anything, it was to the advantage of the slave. Even Blumenbach's discoveries in the comparative anatomy of the skull did not seriously disturb the old regional interpretation of human varieties; and as long as these types were regarded as regional phenomena, they were not unnaturally regarded as due to regional influences. Blumenbach himself, for example, regarded man as naturally white-skinned, and followed Greek precedent in attributing the blackness and yellowness of Africans and Asiatics to the effects of solar heat. He was forced, however, by his comparative method to regard the Negro skull as morphologically nearer than the Caucasian to the skulls of the great apes. On the other hand, the excessive variability of his American skulls, and (later) the marked similarity between his Malay and his Mongoloid material, led him to qualify the regional scheme with which he started; and prepared the way for the zoological, and more especially anatomical, work of the next generation.

But it was no accident that the generation which first doubted, on the political side, the legitimacy of white man's ownership of black man, and translated those doubts into prac-

tice and acts of Parliament, was precisely the generation which first doubted on the theoretic side, whether white man and black man were of the same blood. The explanation is simple and the sequel instructive. As long as slavery was regarded as justifiable morally, no one troubled himself to justify it anthropologically. But no sooner was the naturalness of slavery called in question by the Abolitionists—under the influence of Rousseau's following, and the "Declaration of the Rights of Man"—than the slave-owners raised the previous question: "Granted that I am my brother's keeper, and granted that this means that I may not be his master, yet is *this* man, this black brother, in any true sense my *brother* at all? Is he not, on the face of him, only an exceptionally domesticable animal, and of different lineage from mine?"

The first important treatise was Sommering's *Mémoire sur les Nègres*, in 1785, a perfectly honest piece of scientific work. It was reinforced in 1791 by Camper's study of the anatomy of face and jaw, and by White's work, in 1795, on the forearm. The latter was just too late to influence Buffon in the revised classification which he thought it time to publish in that year; but it influenced profoundly both Prichard and Lawrence in England, and Cuvier and Geoffroy de St. Hilaire abroad. Clearly if man began his career as a single type, he had been *diablement changé en route*. But had there been time for such changes to occur? Purely extraneous considerations, some derived from ancient literature, some from chronological researches in the seventeenth century, and all alike unchecked as yet by the infant science of geology, prevailed to throw anthropologists, and indeed all zoologists alike, into opposing camps. For there is nothing like an error of fact to promote divergence of theory.

Lamarck, followed by Geoffroy de St. Hilaire, and in England by Prichard and Latham, was prepared to contend (1) that a natural species not only could spread into different regions within the accepted limits of time, but also could give rise to strongly marked varieties suited to each of these regions,

through inheritance of acquired variations; (2) that if eventually the process of differentiation should be found to be slower than anthropologists at present supposed, they must nevertheless hold tight to the idea of development, and go back to the Archbishop for more time. Cuvier, at the other extreme, impressed by the persistence of specific differences, and by the weight of the authority which imposed the brief time-limit, assumed, rather than argued, an original multiplicity of types. In the special instance of man, the question was complicated further, and not least for the followers of Cuvier, by the circumstance that the same authorities which placed Creation so late, appeared to assign a single origin to all forms of man. Attempts had indeed been made intermittently from the seventeenth century onward, to dissociate from the family of Adam the remoter and ruder races which travellers were discovering; but in 1800 most people still accepted the tradition of a single origin, and explained the blackness of the Negro by the "curse of Cain." Cuvier himself, somewhat inconsistently, followed the orthodox view on this point also. All mankind, for him, was of one species, and the differences between Caucasian and Negro were racial only. Prichard and most of the Englishmen took the same view, and devoted themselves to the enquiry, *how, when, and why* this single human species had become differentiated regionally.

Many Lamarekian anthropologists on the other hand, holding at the same time that species were mutable, that different types of men showed specific differences, and that the geographical barriers to wholesale migration were insuperable, found it easier to derive the white man and the negro, within their respective regional limits, Europe and Africa, from different species of apes, than to derive white and black man from a common human ancestor. In France the leader of this "polygenist" school was Virey, whose *Histoire naturelle du genre humaine* appeared in 1801. Its influence in England is apparent from Lawrence's *Lectures on the Natural History of Man*, which came out in 1817.

On the continent of Europe, as will be apparent from the dates given above, this zoological controversy coincided almost exactly in time with the new philological movement of which I have already tried to show the significance. The contribution of philology to the discussion was unfortunate. It is concisely expressed in Schlegel's *quot linguae, tot gentes*; and this gross fallacy of the equivalence of speech and breed, dominated continental thought on this subject for half a century, reinforcing the sentiment of nationality in public affairs, and (in this special question) working wholly in favour of the polygenists.

In England, quite different considerations were at work. French political axioms, as to the rights of man, of which I have already traced briefly the anthropological ancestry, operated in England to produce not liberty nor equality, but fraternity; not a revolution among the whites, but emancipation for their black brethren. And inasmuch as the case for abolition rested on the sole consideration that all races of men were in some unqualified sense of one blood, it was clear that the proof or disproof of single origin for black and for white had the most direct bearing upon morals and practical politics. Two consequences can be traced. In England, the cradle of emancipation, polygenist views could hardly get a hearing. As late as 1848 Dr. Prichard, the leading representative of the unitary view, admitted frankly that "if these [polygenist] opinions are not every day expressed in this country, it is because the avowal of them is restrained by a degree of odium that would be excited by it."⁸¹ In America, where slavery was still practised, and supported by vast material interests, all anthropology which assumed or defended the brotherhood of man was discounted as a concession to sentiment or dogma. Those who would appreciate the new bent given to anthropological study in America are referred to the introduction to Nott and Gliddon's *Types*

⁸¹ J. C. Prichard, *Natural History of Man*, London, 1848, p. 6. Prichard himself had had to give up the Ussherian chronology to save the unity of species: to such trials of fortitude were the learned exposed in the middle of the nineteenth century.

of *Mankind*.⁸² Here it is set forth as the province of ethnology to investigate no less "what position in the social scale Providence has assigned to each type of man," than "the primitive organic structure" or "how far a race may have been, or may become, modified by the combined action of time and moral and physical causes." The meaning of this last phrase becomes clearer on the next page, where it is stated that

the grand problem, more particularly interesting to all readers, is that which involves the *common* origin of races; for upon the latter deduction hang not only certain religious dogmas, but the more practical question of the equality and perfectibility of races; we say 'more practical question,' because while Almighty Power, on the one hand, is not responsible to Man for the distinct origin of human races, these, on the other, are accountable to Him for the manner in which their delegated power is used toward each other.

The writers go on to narrate a very curious episode, when Mr. Secretary Calhoun, in the course of diplomatic correspondence with France and England about the proposed annexation of Texas to the United States, called Mr. Gliddon, and through him Dr. S. G. Morton of Philadelphia⁸³ into consultation, and having "soon perceived that the conclusions which he had drawn long before from history, and from his personal observations in America . . . were entirely corroborated by the plain teachings of modern science," he concluded that it behoved the statesman to lay aside all current speculations about the origin and perfectibility of races, and to deal, in political argument, with the simple facts as they stand. The upshot was a strongly-worded despatch from Washington to the American Ambassador to France; and although the English press, "which was then unanimously unitary", complained anxiously that Mr. Calhoun had introduced *ethnology* into diplomatic correspondence, a com-

⁸² Published in Philadelphia in 1854, and already in its seventh edition in 1857. The title itself is instructive.

⁸³ Dr. Morton was the distinguished author of the *Crania Egyptiaca* published in 1844; where the conclusion is maintained that "the organic characters which distinguish the several races of men are as old as the oldest record of our species." It was indeed to determine this point that he turned his attention to *Egyptian* material at all.

munication from the Foreign Office promptly assured our government that Great Britain had no intention of intermeddling with the domestic institutions of other nations.

Less than half a generation later the tables were completely turned. The Ethnological Society of London, which had been founded during the period of nationalist aspiration—*quot linguae tot gentes*—which culminated in 1848, found itself in such complete and cordial agreement with the polygenist propaganda, that when the American crisis became acute the Unitary party seceded, and formed an Anthropological Society, which pursued a not wholly friendly rivalry with the Ethnological.

It took more than two generations, as will be seen from the dates, to settle this momentous question: and then, as so frequently happens in the human sciences, the question was not really settled but superseded. The recognition of Boucher de Perthes' discovery, by the English mission of 1858, the appearance of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859, on the scientific side, and the issue of the American Civil War on the political, shelved the whole problem: and in 1870, three years before the publication of the *Descent of Man*, the Ethnological and the Anthropological Societies buried the hatchet, and became merged in the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland.

Epilogue

These examples, I think, are sufficient to show how intimately the growth of political philosophy has interlocked at every stage with that of anthropological science. Each fresh start on the never-ending quest of *Man as he ought to be* has been the response of theory to fresh facts about *Man as he is*. And, meanwhile, the dreams and speculations of one thinker after another—even dreams and speculations which have moved nations and precipitated revolutions—have ceased to command men's reason, when they ceased to accord with their knowledge.

And we have seen more than this. We have seen the very questions which philosophers have asked, the very questions

which perplexed them, no less than the solutions which they proposed, melt away and vanish, *as problems*, when the perspective of anthropology shifted and the standpoint of observation advanced. This is no new experience; nor is it peculiar either to anthropology among the natural sciences, or to political science among the aspects of the study of man. It is the common law of the mind's growth, which all science manifests, and all philosophy.

And now I would make one more attempt to put on parallel lines the course of political thinking. It is not so very long ago that a great British administrator, returning from one of the gravest trials of statesmanship which our generation has seen, to meet old colleagues and classmates at a college festival, gave it to us as the need he had most felt, in the pauses of his administration, that there did not exist at present any adequate formulation of the great outstanding features of our knowledge (as distinct from our creeds) about human societies and their mode of growth, and he commended it to the new generation of scholarship, as its highest and most necessary task, to face once more the question: What are the forces, as far as we can know them now, which, as Aristotle would have put it, maintain or destroy states?


But if a young student of political science were to set himself to this life-work, where could he turn for his facts? What proportion of the knowable things about the human societies with which travellers' tales and the atlases acquaint him could he possibly bring into his survey, without a lifetime of personal research in every quarter of our planet? I have in mind one such student setting out to investigate, on the lines of modern anthropology, the nature of *authority* and the circumstances of its rise among primitive men; and the difficulty at the outset is precisely as I have described. In the case of the "black fellows" of Australia such a student depends upon the works of some four or five men, representing (at a favourable estimate) one-twentieth even of the known tribes of the accessible parts of that continent. For British South Africa he would be hardly

better served; for British North America, outside the ground covered in British Columbia by Boas and Hill-Tout, he would have almost the field to himself; and the prospect would seem to him the drearier and the more hopeless when he compared it with things on the other side of the forty-ninth parallel.

[The reader is reminded at this point that this essay was originally designed to be read at a meeting in Winnipeg; and that these concluding paragraphs were of immediate application then. In part the circumstances which suggested them have been most happily changed by the establishment of a Department of Ethnology at Ottawa, and the early publications of that department, under the general editorship of the geological survey of Canada, promise well for the fulfillment of its design.

But the other practical suggestion, of a systematic record of the ancestry and physique of newcomers into the states of the New World, still remains unrealized; and meanwhile the generation is dying out, which alone has the most vital data in its memory. As long as this great scientific view is not met, I cannot as historian or as anthropologist regard what I then wrote as obsolete. It was addressed then to fellow-citizens in Canada; but science knows no frontiers, and I leave the words as they stand, for friends and colleagues in California. They too know the need, and as occasion serves, they will play their part to meet it.]

Now, our neighbors south of that line have the reputation of being practical men; in other departments of knowledge they are believed to know well what pays. And I am forced to believe that it is because they know that it *pays*, to know all that can still be known about the forms of human society which are protected and supervised from Washington, that they have gone so far as they have towards rescuing that knowledge



from extinction while still there is time. The Bureau of Ethnology of the United States of America is the most systematic, the most copious, and, I think, taking it all in all, the most scientific of the public agencies for the study of any group of men, *as men*. The only other which can be compared with it is the ethnographical section of the Census of India, and that was an effort to meet, against time, an emergency long predicted, but only suddenly foreseen by the men who were responsible for giving the order. Thus, humanly speaking, it is now not improbable that in one great newly-settled area of the world every tribe of natives, which now continues to inhabit it, may at least be explored, and in some cases really surveyed, before it has time to disappear. But observe, this applies only to the tribes which now continue to exist; and what a miserable fraction they are of what has already perished irrevocably! It is no use crying over spilt milk, as I said to begin with; the only sane course is to be doubly careful of whatever remains in the jug.

An Ethnological Survey for Canada

And now I conclude with a piece of recent history, which will point its own moral. When the British Association met first outside the British Isles, it celebrated its meeting at Montreal by instituting, for the first time, a section for anthropology; and it placed in the chair of that section one of the principal founders of modern scientific anthropology, Dr. Edward Burnett Tylor, then recently installed at Oxford, and still the revered professor of our science there. Through his influence mainly, but with the active goodwill of the leading names in other sciences in Canada, a research committee was formed to investigate the northwest tribes of the Dominion; and for eleven consecutive years expeditions wholly or partly maintained by this Association were sent to several districts of British Columbia. These expeditions cost the Association about £1,200 in all. I am glad to think that the chief

representative of this committee's work, Dr. Franz Boas, has long since realised, in his great contributions to knowledge, the high hopes which his early reports inspired.

When the Association met the second time on Canadian soil, at Toronto, the occasion seemed opportune for a fresh step. Dr. Boas had already undertaken work on a larger scale and under other auspices. But it was thought likely that if a fresh committee of the Association were appointed, with wider terms of reference and further grants, it would be possible to select and to train a small staff of Canadian observers, and by their means to produce such a series of preliminary reports on typical problems of Canadian anthropology as would satisfy the Dominion Government that the need for a thorough systematic survey was a real one, and that such a survey would be practicable with the means and the men which Canada itself could supply. Among the leading members of this Ethnographic Survey Committee I need only mention three—the late Dr. George Dawson, Mr. David Boyle, and Mr. Benjamin Sulte, each eminent already in his own line of study, and all convinced of the great scientific value of what was proposed. The first year's enterprise opened well; workers were found in several districts of Canada; the Association sent out scientific instruments, and formed in London a strong consultative committee to keep the Canadian field-workers in touch with European students of the subject. But the premature death of George Dawson in 1901 broke the mainspring of the machine; the field-workers fell out of touch with one another and with the subject; the instruments were scattered, and in 1904 the Ethnographic Survey Committee was not recommended for renewal.

I need not say how great a disappointment this failure was to those of us who believe that in this department of knowledge Canada has great contributions to make, and who know that if this contribution to knowledge is not made within the next ten years, it can never be made at all. I am not speaking merely of the urgency of exact study of the Indian peoples.

This indeed is obvious and urgent enough; and the magnificent results of organized effort in the United States are there to show how much can still be rescued. But at the moment I appeal rather for the systematic study of your own European immigrants, that stream of almost all known varieties of white men with which you are drenching yearly fresh regions of the earth's surface, which if they have had experience of human settlements at all, have known man only as a predatory migratory animal, more restless than the bison, more feckless and destructive than the wolf. Of your immigrants' dealings with wild nature, you are indeed keeping rough undesigned record in the documents of your Land Surveys, and in the statistics of the spread of agriculture over what once was forest or prairie; and in time to come, *something*—though not, I fear, much—will exist to show what good (and as likely as not, also, what irremediable harm) this age of colonisation has done to the region as a whole. But what you do not keep record of is Nature's dealings with your immigrants; you do not *know*—and as long as you omit to *observe*, you are condemned not to know—the answer to the simple all-important question, *What kinds of men do best in Canada? What kind of men is Canada making out of the raw material which Europe is feeding into God's mills on this side?*

Over in England, we are only too well aware how poor a lead we have given you. We, too, for a century now, have been feeding into other great winnowing chambers the raw crop of our villagers. We have created (to change the metaphor), in our vast towns, great vats of fermenting humanity, under conditions of life which at the best are unprecedented, and at their worst almost unimaginable. That is *our* great experiment in modern English anthropology. We are beginning to know, in the first place, what types of human animal can tolerate and survive the stern conditions of modern urban life. We are learning, still more slowly, what modes of life, what modified structure of the family, of the daily round of society at large, can offer the adjustment to new needs of

life, which human nature demands under this new, almost unbearable strain. We are seeing, more clear in the mass, even if hopelessly involved in detail, the same process of selection going on in the mental furniture of the individuals themselves; new views of life, new beliefs, new motives and modes of action; new, if only in the sense that they presuppose the destruction of the old.

That is our problem in human society at home. And yours, though it has a brighter side, is in its essentials the same. Geographers can tell you something already of the physical "control" which is the setting to all possible societies on Canadian soil. Scientific study of the vanishing remnants of the Redskin tribes may show you a little of the effects of this control, long continued, upon nations whom old Heylin held to be "doubtless the offspring of the Tartars." Sympathetic observation and friendly intercourse may still fill some blanks in our knowledge of their social state; how hunting or fishing—or, in rare cases, agriculture—forms and reforms men's manners and their institutions when it is the dominant interest in their lives. But what climate and economic habit have done in the past with the Redskins, the same climate and other economic habits are as surely doing with ourselves. In the struggle with Nature, as in the struggle with other men, it is the weakest who go to the wall; it is the fittest who survive. And it is our business to *know*, and to record for those who come after us, what manner of men we were, when we came; whence we were drawn, and how we are distributed in this new land. An Imperial Bureau of Ethnology, which shall take for its study all citizens of our State, as such, is a dream which has filled great minds in the past and may some day find realisation. A Canadian Bureau is at the same time a nearer object, and a scheme of more practicable size. In the course of this meeting, information and proposals for such a Bureau of Ethnology are to be laid before this section by more competent authorities than I. My task has only been to show, in a preliminary way, what our science has done in the past,

to stimulate political philosophy, and to determine its course and the order of its discoveries.

"Some men are borne," said Edward Grimstone just three centuries ago, "so farre in love with themselves, as they esteeme nothing else, and think that whatsoever fortune hath set without the compasse of their power and government should also be banished from their knowledge. Some others, a little more carefull; who finding themselves engaged by their birth, or abroad, to some one place, strive to understand how matters pass there, and remaine so tied to the consideration of their owne Commonweale, as they affect nothing else, carrying themselves as parties of that imperfect bodie, whereas in their curiositie they should behave themselves as members of this world." It is as "members of this world," I hope, that we meet together to-day.

